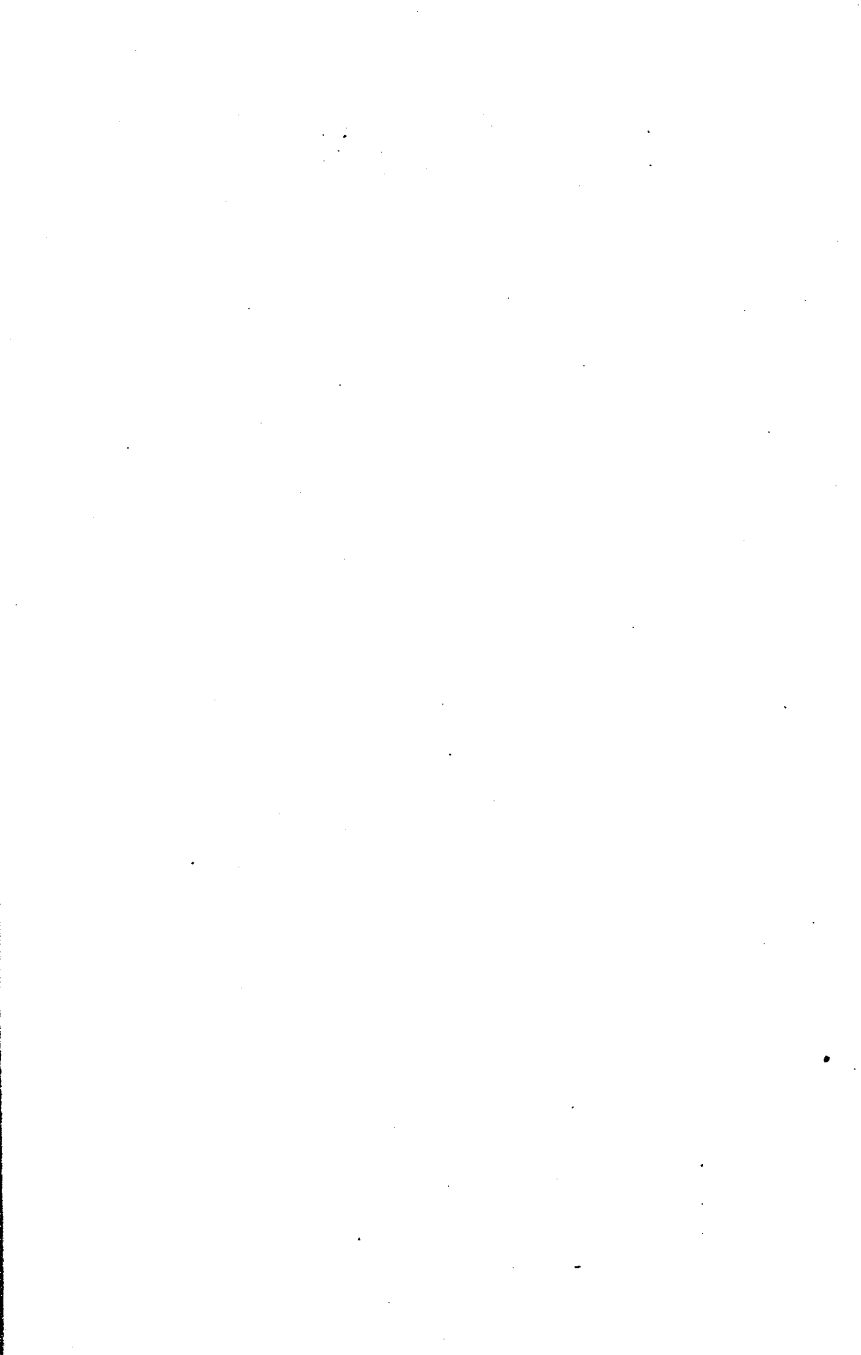


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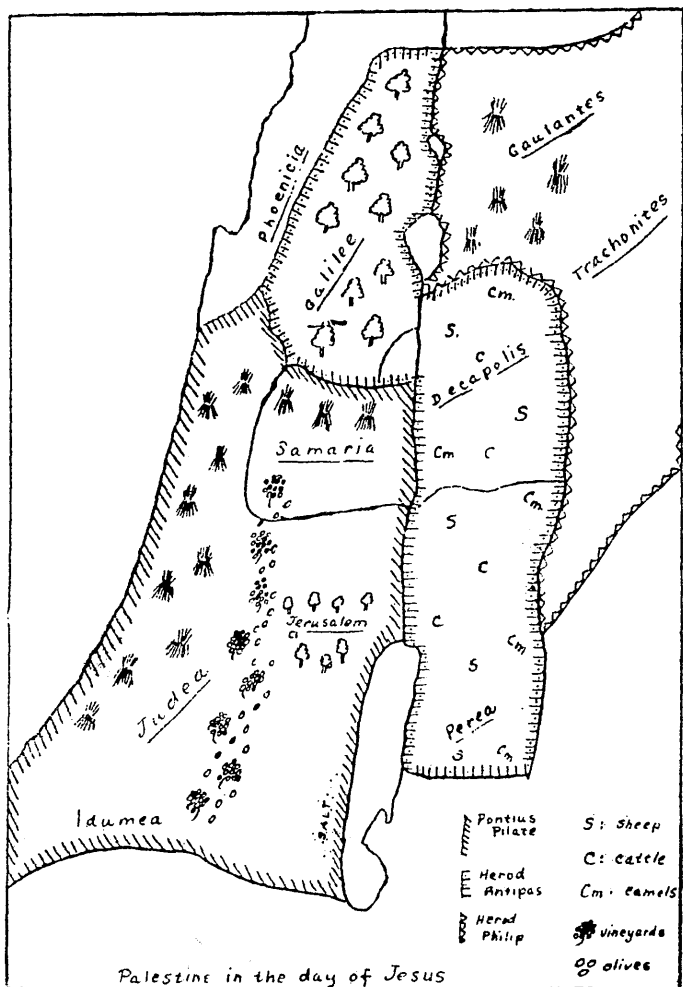


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**TOWARD
UNDERSTANDING
JESUS**

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*Toward
Understanding
Jesus*

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A WORD TO THE TEACHER

It is not easy for young people to understand Jesus. He lived in a period quite different from our own, and he shared thought forms which have been left behind in the development of the religion of which he is the founder. Our young people stumble over the constant references to demons in the Gospels, and the general expectation that miracles were everyday occurrences. They are even more confused by the catastrophic ideas of the Kingdom of God held by the immediate followers of the Master. Because Jesus is so often approached with emotionalism, and surrounded by the legendary, the chief picture of him which many young people hold in their minds is a combination formed from the memory of stories of Christmas Eve (in which Santa Claus is strangely confused), the painting of Christ in the Temple, and certain Easter legends.

This book is an attempt to help young people understand Jesus. Its only merit rests on the fact that it has grown out of many years of teaching young people, and of teaching teachers of young people. The author is grateful to the boys and girls of the Friends School of Baltimore, and to the teachers who attended his courses in the Baltimore

School of Christian Education. Their eagerness, earnestness, and frank bewilderment has served as a constant spur to their guide. Through them he has learned how necessary it is, if we would understand Jesus, to simplify our approach, pass beyond the legendary, and to look beneath the thought forms of a distant century for the eternal truth.

The book is divided into three parts, each very different from the other, and each demanding a special treatment and method of procedure. In Part I, "The Boyhood of Jesus," the author desires to help build up the background out of which Jesus came. In this part, as in the other two, there are section and not chapter divisions. This is to remind the teacher constantly that each section is a unit of work, more or less complete in itself, which, in nearly every case, should take more than one period to complete. He hopes the teacher will not hurry, but will see that every point is fully covered before going further. In Part I it is suggested that the pupils write a short account in notebook style to serve as a summary of this first division. Four chapters only are suggested, not enough to cause anyone to grow tired of the task. Other suggestions for individual notebooks, and a substitute plan if the teacher does not wish to develop them, will be found in the text. Constructive Work is suggested in Part I which will appeal to the pupils, help in their search for information, and provide some outlet for their interests.

In Part II, "What Jesus Did," the life of Jesus unfolds. "Readings, Problems and Discussion" appear at the end of each section to illuminate the meaning of the given event in the life of Jesus. Here also it is hoped the teacher will not feel he must cover each section in one period. If given sufficient time, the readings and questions will promote discussion, and bring out different points of view, which will make the material live.

Part III is devoted to the teachings of Jesus, under the heading, "What Jesus Said." His foundation ideas are given concerning God, Man, and the Kingdom of God. This is followed by an analysis of the Sermon on the Mount, with constant references to corollaries and additional teachings found elsewhere in the Gospels. A constant effort has been made to relate these ideas and ethical teachings to contemporary life. Readings are supplemented with questions designed to bring out various possible views in the teachings, to promote discussion, and to bring the material from the realm of the abstract into everyday life as experienced by high school boys and girls.

Time and again the teacher and pupils are asked to read in the New Testament. The author is firmly convinced that many misconceptions concerning Jesus persist because children and young people are told about Jesus, but do not read for themselves the earliest records we have of his life and teachings. No one can ever have any deep appreciation of

Jesus, nor catch the challenge of his way of life without constantly reading his quoted sayings, and the descriptions of what he did as preserved by those closest to him. The readings should receive careful attention whenever mentioned. If some of the class have at hand one of the new translations of the New Testament, such as that made by Edgar J. Goodspeed or James Moffatt, it may often be helpful to have such translations compared with the King James or American Revised versions in use by the class as a whole.

WHERE THE BOOK MAY BE USED

The material grew out of day school teaching in the hands of one who has had long experience with Sunday classes as well. He has tried to present the material in such a way that it can be used in Sunday classes, or in week-day classes—either in private schools, or in Daily Vacation Bible Schools. The book is written for high school young people.

HELPFUL REFERENCES

If the teacher can have the use of only one reference book, it is suggested that he secure either *The Life of Jesus* by William Byron Forbush or *The Life of Christ* by Isaac B. Burgess. Both were written for the high school age.

Charles F. Kent's *The Biblical Geography of Palestine* will be of special use in Part I. In dramatizing incident or parable, Elizabeth E. Miller's *Dram-*

atization in the Church School will be very useful.
BOSWORTH, EDWARD I. *The Life and Teaching of Jesus*. Macmillan Co., 1924.

BRANSCOMB, HARVIE. *The Teachings of Jesus*. Cokesbury Press, 1931.

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CASE, SHIRLEY J. *Jesus—A New Biography*. University of Chicago Press, 1927.

DENNY, WALTER B. *The Career and Significance of Jesus*. Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1933.

FORBUSH, WILLIAM BYRON. *The Life of Jesus*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912.

FOSDICK, HARRY EMERSON. *A Pilgrimage to Palestine*. Macmillan Co., 1927.

KENT, CHARLES FOSTER. *Biblical Geography of Palestine*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

MILLER, ELIZABETH E. *Dramatization in the Church School*. University of Chicago Press, 1923.

WHERE THE STUDENT BEGINS

WHAT THIS COURSE OF STUDY IS ABOUT

If we glance back through the pages of history we find certain men and women who tower above the rest of mankind as mountain peaks tower above the main part of the mountain range. These men and women we say are "great" because of the influence they have upon others.

Some men are great because they have held great power. History speaks of Alexander the Great, Charlemagne (the French name for Charles the Great), or Frederick the Great, because these men controlled huge armies and changed the map of the world. In such a modern classification we might place Mussolini, the Dictator of Italy, because he has supreme command of a large army, and because he has already changed the map of Africa by conquering one independent nation on that continent.

Some men are considered great because of the position they have held. A President of the United States might be said to have achieved a certain measure of greatness in his own time by election to this high office, even though his permanent influence upon the world might not be very important.

A Prime Minister of England, a Pope of the Catholic Church, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, might all be properly called great, at least in their own time, because of the importance of their positions.

Some men are great because of their following. St. Francis, who lived in Italy between 1181 and 1226, is not only great because of the purity of his character, but because of his influence on a multitude of men and women who adopted his way of living. He started the Order of Friars who gave themselves in service to the sick, the wretched, and the poverty-stricken people of Europe.

Some men are great because of the ideas they have contributed to the mental growth of the human race. Isaiah is one of the many figures in our Bible who have placed us in debt because of the great ideas he expressed. Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Millikan, Einstein are scientists who influence the world because of their contributions to knowledge; Dante, Shakespeare, Molière are great because of their written works.

THE GREATNESS OF JESUS

Jesus of Nazareth influenced western history more than any single individual who has ever lived. Yet he is great because of other reasons than those which have marked most of the great men already mentioned. Jesus towers above mankind as Mt. Everest towers above all other mountains in the world. Yet

Jesus had no power by which he could command men against their will, he held no position of influence during his lifetime, his following in Palestine was small, and he wrote no books. Jesus remains, however, the greatest of all truly "great" men of history.

Since the first century men have struggled to put into practice the ideals Jesus held for individual living and for group conduct. Today men look back upon his life as the most perfect example of high and noble living. Today the influence of Jesus permeates, often unconsciously, all our ways.

Because Jesus is the one supremely "great" man of history, because he has had such an important influence in the past, and exerts a growing influence in our own time, we want to know why he has been so influential, what he said, and what he did. We should like to know what his ideals and his hopes were, and how he expected them to be realized. Such a study should be interesting, stimulating, and challenging.

TOWARD THE UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS

We could not expect to understand the life of George Washington, or his ideals for the United States, unless we knew something about the thirteen colonies of Great Britain as they existed in the later part of the eighteenth century. To understand why George Washington was willing to cease to be a loyal subject of the King of England, why he was willing

to risk his property and life in a seemingly foolhardy effort to establish an independent government, we would need to know a good deal about the settlement of the eastern seaboard of the present United States, the kind of people who made up the population of the land, their vocations, their religious ideas, their economic needs, and their relations with the mother country. With this knowledge as a background we could better appreciate what George Washington did, and what his ideals and hopes for the new country were.

In order to understand what Jesus did and said it is even more necessary to know something about the land in which he lived, the people among whom he worked, and the general conditions as they existed in the first century. This is due to the fact that Jesus lived so many years ago, in a land and among a people so unlike our own.

It is at this point that our study begins. What was life like in Palestine when Jesus was a boy? Can we picture how he lived as a youth in his home in Nazareth? What were the dreams and anxieties of his people?

MAKING THE SEARCH DEFINITE

To find the answers to the questions suggested in the preceding paragraph we need to go in search of facts. Many of these facts will be found later in this book, others can be secured from the New Testament, and from reference books.

In the sections to come you will find constant references to verses and chapters in the Bible, to incidents in the life of Jesus, to his parables and teachings. In all cases read these. Often young people say, "I never understood the life of Jesus," or, "I wish I had studied the life of Jesus to see what he did and what he really said." This is an opportunity to come to know both what Jesus did as the story is told in the Gospels, and what he said. By actually reading these things for yourselves you will come to know and appreciate him.

That you may secure the greatest value from this search in Part I, for the facts concerning the boyhood of Jesus, and to be better able to have an accurate picture in your mind of life as it was in his time, it is suggested that you make a book which you might call, "The Boyhood of Jesus," or "The Boy of Nazareth." In courses in the social sciences many high school young people make beautiful notebooks on projects in history or literature. This notebook on "The Boyhood of Jesus" might be such a project. It need not consist of more than four written chapters, but if it is well illustrated with maps, pictures, and charts, it will be a permanent record of what you have discovered. When the notebooks are finished, the class might arrange an exhibition of the work done that others who are interested in them could see their work. It is suggested that your book cover only Part I, Sections 1, 2, 3 and perhaps 4 of this course of study.

The making of notebooks is optional. Perhaps you may wish to substitute an oral report to the class on certain topics suggested in the first four sections. Each person might be ready to report on certain topics, having first outlined what ground will be covered, and made notes to help with the report.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

This book is divided into sections instead of chapters. A section represents the work of several class periods, and it cannot be adequately covered in one week. Do not hurry.

1. What qualities make a man or woman "great"?
2. List some men and women who have been great because of the power they held.
3. What positions are so important in your state or city that the holder of these offices is conspicuous? Would you consider the holder of such offices, "great"?
4. Name several individuals who may rightly be termed great because of the number of their admirers or followers.
5. Name men and women who are great because of the ideas they have contributed to civilization in the following fields:

law	medicine
government	agriculture
religion	engineering
invention	science

6. Does the measure of a man's greatness vary

with the passing of centuries? Is this simply because we have gradually changed our ideas about what makes a man great?

7. Here are three men all of whom were considered great while they were living: Thothmes III, Pharaoh of Egypt and conqueror of an Asiatic empire; Frederick the Great of Prussia; Thomas A. Edison. Which of these three do you think most fairly deserves the title "great"?

PART I

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

SECTION I

THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND PALESTINE

Suppose you were writing to a boy who lived in New Zealand and wanted to tell him about yourself, what would he need to learn from you before he could picture the kind of life you lived? Surely you would need to tell him about: the geography of your home area, the government of your country, what your home town or city was like, what type of school you attended, what church you went to, and something about your family. With this information before him, your New Zealand friend could better understand the letters you exchanged with him and your accounts of daily affairs.

It is necessary that we understand some of the same items about first century Palestine, and about the home life of Jesus, if we would picture his boyhood to ourselves.

THE ROMAN WORLD IN THE FIRST CENTURY

In the lifetime of Jesus his homeland was part of the great Roman Empire. This Empire completely surrounded the Mediterranean Sea, with the exception of a small portion of northwestern Africa. It

included the present-day countries of Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, much of Germany and Belgium, Switzerland, Jugoslavia, part of Hungary, the Balkan States, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria. Thus it is easy to see why the Mediterranean was called a "Roman Lake" in this period. The great size of this empire can be understood better when it is realized that the distance from the Roman outpost in France on the west, to Syria on the east was as great as the distance from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Great Salt Lake in Utah; and the distance from the Danube on the northern boundary of the Empire to the southern boundary in the Sahara desert was as far as the distance from Chicago to New Orleans.

This great territory was ruled by a "Caesar" who made his headquarters usually at Rome, but it was divided into various provinces governed by appointees of the emperor.

In New Testament times the rule of Rome was strong and efficient, and native peoples were allowed to maintain their own customs and religions. To those peoples who did not rebel against Roman rule, and who paid the taxes, the Romans gave the benefit of peace and protection, of commerce based on good roads, freedom from robbers on land and pirates on the sea, and the advantages that come from a free exchange of literature and thought through the use of a common language. Many peoples accepted the Roman rule and became amal-

gamated into the unity of a common whole, but the Jewish race was never content to be dominated by an alien race. Their discontent under Roman rule is a marked characteristic of the days of Jesus.

THE POLITICAL UPS AND DOWNS OF PALESTINE

The Jewish people knew what it meant to be a conquered nation long before the coming of the Romans. The early history of the Hebrews is well known, their wanderings under tribal leaders, the conquest of Palestine, and the establishment of the Kingdom by Saul, but the extraordinary manner in which they survived later events is not so well understood. A glance at this table of happenings brings their history down into the lifetime of Jesus.

- 937 B.C. Death of King Solomon and division of the Hebrew people into two nations, Israel and Judah.
- 721 B.C. Extinction of the northern kingdom of Israel, by Assyria.
- 586 B.C. Jerusalem destroyed and the Hebrew people scattered. Some escaped into Egypt, some remained in Palestine, and the majority settled in Babylonia.
- 538 B.C. Return of the Hebrews to Jerusalem under Persian Rule.
- 332 B.C. Palestine conquered by Alexander the Great.
- 320 B.C. Palestine ruled from Egypt.

218 B.C. Palestine conquered by Syrian Greeks.

167 B.C. Successful revolt began by the Jews
against the Greeks of Syria.

143-63 B.C. Independent kingdom of the Jews.

63 B.C. Palestine is conquered by Rome.

39 B.C.-4 A.D. Herod ruled for the Romans.

THE HOMELAND OF JESUS

After the death of Herod, Palestine was subdivided by the Romans. Galilee, the home province of Jesus, and Perea east of the Jordan were ruled by Herod Antipas. Another son of Herod, Philip, ruled the northeastern section of the country; and the larger division of Samaria, Judea, and Idumea, was soon placed under a procurator or governor. In addition to these provinces there were in Palestine and east of the Jordan a group of ten free cities which formed a league called the Decapolis. They stood in relation to the land about them in somewhat the position Danzig holds to Germany.

Palestine itself was a very tiny bit of the great Roman Empire. Its three divisions covered an area of about 10,000 square miles, which is similar in size to our states of Maryland or Vermont. But in this small area there was a great variety of climatic and geographic conditions. The coast lands have always been semi-tropical, and grow figs, dates and palm trees. The central plains, like the plain of Esdraelon, has a climate not unlike that of North Carolina, and grows wheat and barley. The range of hills which

divide Palestine north and south are barren and rocky, but grow the olives and grape vineyards which mean so much to the Palestinian, and are the home of the flocks of sheep so often pictured in accounts of the Holy Land. The Jordan Valley has a climate like that of Death Valley in California, because it is so far below sea level; but further east the land rises again and becomes good grazing land for cattle and sheep. The extremes of depression and elevation are shown by the fact that the Jordan Valley at the Dead Sea is 2,600 feet below sea level, and Mt. Hermon in the north is 9,200 feet above sea level. By way of comparison, our Mt. Washington is 6,288 feet high, though in the west Mt. Whitney is 14,501 feet above sea level. Death Valley in California is 276 feet below sea level.

In the days of Jesus, Palestine supported a population considerably larger than it does today, totalling about one million and a half, of whom one million were members of the Jewish race. Jesus' own province of Galilee had in the neighborhood of 300,000 Jews and 100,000 Gentiles.

Palestine on the whole was considered a fertile land in ancient times. Its people were self-supporting and exported such things as grain, olive oil, fish, and salt to other parts of the Roman Empire. The coast and valley lands raised the grains, the low hills were used for vineyards and olive groves, and the higher rocky lands were occupied by shepherds. Galilee was one of the most fertile sections of the

country and was occupied by farmers, shepherds, and a fishing population near the Sea of Galilee.

NAZARETH

Jesus grew up in the village of Nazareth, which was a small town on a ridge of land in the southern part of Galilee, about midway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Farmers lived in Nazareth and went out each day to their fields below the town, as did the caretakers of the vineyards and olive groves. Shepherds, who kept their flocks on the hills north of the town, came down from time to time to sell their wool. A main highway ran a few miles west of the town, and four miles to the south the Greek city of Sepphoris was being rebuilt during the early manhood of Jesus. Twenty miles to the east lived the fishermen of the Sea of Galilee.

Greek merchants, and Roman soldiers could frequently be seen in Nazareth, but most of the population was Jewish. Among these were tailors, carpenters, masons, millers, bakers, cheesemakers, tanners, smiths, spice merchants, weavers, dyers, potters, glaze-makers, as well as retired farmers, scribes, beggars and lepers.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

In order to secure the greatest value from the "Constructive Work" and the "Questions and Problems for Discussion," several class periods should be devoted to them.

1. Begin your own story of the boyhood of Jesus by summarizing the information secured in this section in class, or through discussion and reading concerning "The Land in which Jesus Lived." It will save much class time if you write your chapter at home and then bring it to class.

2. Make a map of the Roman Empire as it existed at the death of Augustus in 14 A.D. This could be traced from a book on ancient history. Or you might prefer to outline on a present-day map of Europe the old boundaries of the Roman Empire.

3. Trace an outline map of Palestine, and on it place the political divisions as they existed in the days of Jesus. Color each division in some special way, or otherwise mark it off from the others. The frontispiece is the copy of such a map made by a junior high school girl. She showed the major divisions of the country by heavily shading the boundaries, and, in the original, by using colored lines within each division.

4. Trace the outline map between Sections XIII and XIV, and upon it mark the products of the land. Note the symbols used to show the various crops in the frontispiece map.

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Under what conquerors were the Jewish people most secure, Babylonians, Syrian Greeks, or Romans? Why?

2. In what part of the world are the Jewish people being persecuted today?

3. Under what conditions is it possible for minority groups in a nation to preserve their identity and their culture, and so make a contribution to general civilization? Consider, for example, the French population of Canada, the Negroes in the United States, and the Jews in Palestine today.

4. Do you hold a prejudice towards any group in your home community? Has this group made any contribution of value in the area from which they originally came? Has this group made any contribution of value to your community?

5. What have the following peoples contributed toward the general welfare and civilization of mankind: Germans, French, English, Italians, Swedish, Japanese, Russian, American Indians, Arabs?

6. What contributions have been made by the Jews to the world?

SECTION II

THE HOME LIFE OF JESUS

A PALESTINIAN HOUSE

The houses of Palestine were built especially for protection against the heat, and therefore were made with thick walls, and few windows. Usually the roof was flat so that the family could rest upon it in the cool of the evening. The typical house had one story, made of flat stone, mud, or sun-dried brick. Such houses needed constant repairing as the rainy season destroyed the loose plaster and caused the foundation to deteriorate. In cities wealthier citizens built higher houses of stone.

The peasant houses usually had only one room, divided between a raised section called the mustabeh on which the family lived, and a lower section occupied by the domestic animals. At one side of the mustabeh was a hearth and sometimes a chimney, though often the smoke had to find its way out through the small window or through cracks in the walls. The flat roof was reached by an outside stairway, and upon the roof a bower of branches was often constructed for use in the summer time. In the

towns the larger houses were built about a courtyard in which the animals were kept.

Harry Emerson Fosdick in his book, *A Pilgrimage to Palestine*, describes a house in Nazareth in these words: "Come up these narrow, winding, unsanitary streets of Nazareth and you can see houses still into whose simple, ancient architecture the family of Jesus might move today and feel at home. One large, square room suffices for the house. The walls of rough-dressed stone are from three to four feet thick and the roof is of stone, domed up and covered with clay mortar rolled hard to shed the rain. An outside stairway runs up to the roof, for that is a cool place to sleep when nights are warm, a convenient drying place for fruit, and even, as I have often seen, a fair grazing ground for goats when grass is growing. The outstanding feature of the interior is a masonry platform raised to ten feet above ground, supported by stone arches, and reached by a narrow flight of steps. Here the family live when they are indoors by day, and here they sleep at night. Two miniature windows high up from the ground furnish all the light and air save that which may come through the door; and an open fireplace, with a chimney or without one, furnishes warmth in winter. In winter, too, the space beneath the family's raised platform is filled at night with household animals, sheep, goats, dogs, and chickens, and their warm presence is counted in lieu of fire."

THE FURNISHINGS OF A PEASANT HOME

A peasant home did not have bedstead, table, or chairs. Bedding was kept in boxes or chests, or rolled and put into natural recesses in the walls. The family slept with their clothes on upon a stuffed mattress, pulling a quilt over their heads at night. During the day individuals sat cross-legged upon mats of grass or rushes. Bins or large clay jars stood in a row at one end of the mustabeh to hold the supplies of wheat, dried figs, lentils, water, olive oil, and honey. Also within the house was a grinding mill, a loom, and tools for the craftsman.

The chief foods were such vegetables as beans, onions, leeks, garlic, cucumbers, and lettuce; bread, olives and olive oil, milk, butter, cheese, fruits, and meats. A favorite dish consisted of small pieces of meat stewed with such vegetables as beans and lentils, and eaten with pieces of bread taking the place of spoons and forks. The meats used came from sheep, cattle and goats; pork and camel meat were forbidden by the Jewish religious law. The favorite fruits were almond, quince, dates, figs, olives, mulberry, pomegranate, and grape.

Bread was baked by heating flat rocks and then placing thin layers of dough upon the rocks, or by burning grass and small bits of wood inside large clay jars and then placing the dough on the jar. Meats were roasted on a spit over a fire of charcoal, or boiled in stews. Food was usually served in one

large clay bowl out of which all members of the family helped themselves. The morning meal was very light, there was no noon meal, other than the munching of a handful of olives, figs or a bit of bread, and the main meal came at night after the farmers had returned to their homes in the villages.

FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE JEWS

The Jewish people looked upon children as the greatest gift of God. A family without children received great sympathy, and a married woman who had no children was felt to be under the disapproval of God. In the Old Testament the Psalmist wrote (Psalm 127: 3-5), "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them."

Sons were of greatest value because they meant strength to the family in time of danger, and because of the wealth they might secure in later years. They were also the protectors of aged parents. Daughters were only less highly regarded because they would leave the family in later years. Mothers taught the boys and girls in their earliest years, but the fathers were responsible for educating them in the religion of their people, and in a family craft or business. Children were under the absolute authority of their parents, and a wicked son might legally be put to death at the request of his father.

Marriage was entirely arranged by the parents without consideration of the wishes of their children. Girls were often betrothed while still babies, though the actual marriage would not take place for years. Wealthy men often had more than one wife, though the average Jewish family in the days of Jesus did not follow this practice.

In every land a large share of the population was held as bondservants or slaves. But slaves among the Jews were not treated as harshly as the Negro slaves were treated in the United States before 1865. Jewish slaves were protected by kindly laws and were often considered members of the family. They worshiped with their masters and frequently were adopted as sons and daughters, or freed after some years of service. It was not uncommon for a man in financial difficulty to sell his children or himself as a bondservant.

THE LIFE OF A CARPENTER

Jesus was a carpenter and the son of a carpenter, a craftsman of an honorable trade. Thus he was not a member either of the wealthy aristocracy nor was he a common laborer working under an overseer in the fields. In his day the craftsmen, such as carpenters, bakers, millers and dyers, ranked in what we would today call the "middle class." They were not subjected to the fluctuations of fortune or weather as were the laborers.

A carpenter in Palestine made in his shop such

things as farm implements like wooden plows, rakes, forks for winnowing the grain, yokes for oxen, carts and cartwheels, wooden shovels, handles for sickles and knives, doors and door frames, and wooden locks and keys. A carpenter of this period was also a mason and could build houses, repair foundations, and line wells.

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH AND MARY

Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters. The names of the sisters are not given, but the names of the brothers were James, Joses, Judas and Simeon. None of these followed him during his life-work, though James became the head of the Christian church in Jerusalem at a later period.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

This section cannot be of greatest value if done in one week.

1. In your New Testament look up these references and see if Jesus ever refers to his work, or if it suggested ideas to him.

Matthew 11: 28-30

Matthew 7: 24-27

Luke 6: 41-42

John 14: 2

John 10: 7-9

2. Look up the following passages in the New Testament and see what reference is made to home life, houses, or furnishings.

Mark 2: 4

Mark 10: 25

Mark 4: 21

Mark 13: 15, 16

Mark 14: 19, 20

Matthew 6: 30

Matthew 13: 33

Luke 17: 34

Luke 13: 34

3. Look up the following references and see if Jesus shared the Jewish affection for children.

Matthew 18: 2-6

Matthew 18: 10, 14

Matthew 19: 13-15

4. The names of the brothers of Jesus are found in Mark 6: 3, and Matthew 13: 55, 56.

5. Write the second chapter of your book using the material already given, plus any facts that are brought out in class or which you find in other reading, and in the Bible references above.

Here is how one junior high school student wrote such a chapter:

"Jesus lived in the town of Nazareth, in the province of Galilee. Nazareth had about 7000 persons living there. Most of the people were farmers or vine-dressers. The people in the neighborhood of Nazareth were farmers, fishermen twenty miles away, and city people about four miles away. Jerusalem was looked up to by the people of Nazareth.

"Jesus' home was made of dried clay, with only one room. The roof of the house was used for drying food and for sleeping. There was hardly any furniture in the house. The people used mats and pillows for chairs. In order to get water, the women of those days had to go to the one well of the village, and then bring back the water in jars or skins.

"Mary, Jesus' mother, was a very fine woman. She

taught her family of seven children. She also went to the well every day. Jesus went with her at times to get the water.

“Joseph was a very good parent also. He taught Jesus the trade of carpenter. In those days the fathers were held responsible for their sons.”

SECTION III

THE EDUCATION OF A JEWISH BOY

How diverse are the factors which enter into one's education! You eat with a knife and fork, but Chinese boys and girls use chop sticks; you learn English in the elementary grades of school and study French and German in the high school, but in Palestine the students in the Friends School at Ramallah learn Arabic in the elementary grades and English in the high school. You attend a Friends Meeting for worship in which there are perhaps long periods of silence only occasionally broken by vocal messages, but in the Balkans the boys attend a Greek Orthodox Church, standing throughout the long service, and listen to a choir chant a long ritual ending in the celebration of the mass. You go to school in the same building with your sisters or their girl companions; but boys and girls never go to the same school in Syria. You play football, but in England the boys play rugby or cricket. Much of your education depends upon the country in which you live, and the time in which you happen to be born. How different education was in Palestine in the first century.

EDUCATION IN PALESTINE

A knowledge of the requirements of the Old Testament Law, found in the first five books of our Bible, was the center of the education of Jewish children. This was commanded in such passages as Deuteronomy 6: 6, 7 where it reads, "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

We may judge that Joseph and Mary taught Jesus many of the great passages of the Law, explaining to him their meaning. Each day he would repeat the Shema, or solemn confession of faith of his people, which is found in Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5 and reads, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." To keep these words ever before the family the first words of the passage were written on parchment and enclosed in a metal or leather case and fastened to the doorpost. Jesus would have been taught to touch this every time he went in or out of the house. He would also have seen small leather boxes containing the same words fastened to the foreheads or wrists of some especially pious men who desired to indicate their loyalty to the Law.

Other home customs would include a prayer of thanksgiving on rising in the morning, the washing of hands in a special way before each meal, and the giving of thanks before partaking of food.

In addition to being responsible for teaching and explaining certain sections of the Jewish Law to his son, Joseph was responsible for teaching Jesus the family trade. Every Jewish boy, even though he had the prospect of inheriting great wealth, was expected to know a trade. Thus Jesus learned to handle the saw, hammer, plane, and mason's tools, while his sisters learned the household arts of baking, sewing, and weaving cloth from their mother.

In addition to some knowledge of the Law, boys and girls in Jewish homes learned, as they do today, to sing many of the psalms, and we can be sure they repeatedly asked their parents, or the village story teller, to retell for them the stories of their great national heroes such as Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. These stories from the various books of the Old Testament had a strong influence on the boys and girls.

FORMAL EDUCATION

We are not sure how extensive the opportunities for education were in schools in a town like Nazareth in the days of Jesus. Records tell us that thirty or forty years after Jesus reached manhood, schools were established throughout Palestine, but we do not know if there was an elementary school in

Nazareth when he was a boy or not. If there were such an elementary school, it would have been in connection with the synagogue and its purpose would have been to teach a more extensive knowledge of the Law than could be taught at home. In such a school the only text book would have been the Old Testament, and from it the children would learn to read and write, and they would learn the literature and history of their people from the same source.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but the language of the common people in the first century in Palestine was Aramaic. Thus Jesus was bilingual. The upper classes, and perhaps many others, knew Greek from their association with the Gentiles who formed nearly a third of the population. Although there was an important Greek city only four miles from Nazareth, the New Testament writers do not indicate that Jesus knew the Greek language and literature of his day.

Luke tells us that Jesus could write, and he often read from the Hebrew Old Testament in the synagogue and translated the verses into Aramaic so the audience would understand it. Whether he attended a synagogue school in Nazareth, studied under a local teacher, or learned the Old Testament alone, Jesus showed in later years a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of that literature. He quoted the Old Testament frequently in his teaching, and constantly used illustrations drawn from the various books.

There were schools of higher learning in Jerusalem which were somewhat like our theological or law schools today, but we know from John 7: 15 that Jesus never attended one of these.

THE SYNAGOGUE

There was only one temple in the entire land, and that was in Jerusalem, but each village had its synagogue. This building was the center of village life, serving as a house of worship, a school, a community house, a court, and a public hall. Here alms were collected and distributed. The main function of the synagogue was the teaching of the Law to the people, so that they might remain true to the commands laid down in the pages of scripture. The synagogue building varied greatly according to the size and wealth of the congregation. In every synagogue there was a raised platform, usually in the center of the building, on which was the closet or "ark," containing the scrolls of the Scriptures, and a reading desk. About the platform were benches for the congregation. The "chief seats" were near the "ark," facing the people, and were occupied by the most important people. Men and women probably sat in separate sections, with the young people in the rear of the building.

The elders had general charge of the synagogue service, and a "Ruler of the Synagogue" was appointed to have charge of the external order of public worship, and to supervise general synagogue

activities. The elder appointed an individual to read, to lead in prayer, and to interpret the section of the scriptures which was read. Any male Jew who could read from the Hebrew might be asked to do this, though it was natural that if a trained scribe or priest was present he would be asked to serve. In no case was any individual paid for service in connection with the worship.

The Sabbath morning service consisted of the repeating of the Shema (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; Deuteronomy 11: 13-21; Numbers 15: 37-41), the reading from the Law (the first five books of the Old Testament), reading from the prophets, a discourse, and a benediction. Probably there was congregational singing of the psalms during the synagogue service. There might be no discourse, but when it was a part of the service the speaker sat down during his talk. Faithful Jews also gathered at the synagogue on the Sabbath afternoon, and on at least three other occasions during the week.

THE FESTIVALS

Our year is broken by delightful festivals at Christmas time, on Thanksgiving Day, the Fourth of July, and New Year's Day. The Jews celebrated even more special days than we do, and these formed a pleasant break in the ordinary routine for the boys and girls of the first century. The weekly festival was the Sabbath, which began on Friday evening and ended on Saturday at sundown. No other peo-

ples in the ancient world had such a day of rest every seventh day. The Sabbath was a day of quiet and relaxation and the men and older boys spent much of their time in the synagogue. The Passover in the spring was the most important patriotic holiday, then came the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall, and the Feast of Purim in the spring. Each month was also begun by a minor festival. At all the important festivals, parents took especial pains to see that their children understood the reason for the celebration and what it meant to the nation; in some of the festivals the boys and girls could be active participants.

THE HOPE OF THE PEOPLE

There was one other influence which had a formative effect upon every Jewish boy and girl, this was the Messianic hope of the people. Palestine was a conquered province of the Roman Empire, and it was only natural that the Jewish people should long to be free, with their own rulers, and with the opportunity to develop their own civilization. But the Jewish people felt this deliverance from Rome would only come about by the active aid of God. For generations the Jews believed that, at some future time, God would intervene in the affairs of the nation either directly, or through a hero-king who would free Palestine from the foreign conquerors and release the Jewish people from bondage. This promised deliverance by God was delayed, the nation felt, be-

cause of the sins of the people, but in the near future they hoped God would feel the people had suffered sufficiently and would intervene to help them. Most of the Jews evidently looked for an heroic leader of the ancient house of King David to lead them against the Romans and establish a glorious kingdom made up of Jews, and of Gentiles converted to Judaism; others looked for a heavenly being to appear as God's Anointed One who would establish the Kingdom of God. The word Messiah means "Anointed One," and might be applied to a human or a heavenly leader.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

The material suggested under "Constructive Work" and "Questions and Problems for Discussion" will be of greatest value if considered over a period of several weeks.

1. Find out the extent to which Jesus used the Scriptures of his people.

- A. Note in a single typical chapter of Luke how many references there are to Old Testament passages. One member of the class can read aloud the New Testament reference, followed by a second who will read the Old Testament reference. The same plan might be followed in B and C.

Luke 4: 4 compare with Deuteronomy 8: 3.

Luke 4: 8 compare with Deuteronomy 6: 13.

Luke 4: 10, 11 compare with Psalm 91: 11, 12.

Luke 4: 18, 19 compare with Isaiah 61: 1, 2.

Luke 4: 26 compare with 1 Kings 17: 9.

Luke 4: 27 compare with 2 Kings 5: 1, 14.

B. Note in a single chapter in Matthew how many similar references there are.

Matthew 11: 5 compare with Isaiah 61: 1.

Matthew 11: 10 compare with Malachi 3: 1.

Matthew 11: 23a compare with Isaiah 14: 13, 15.

Matthew 11: 23b compare with Genesis 19: 24.

Matthew 11: 29 compare with Jeremiah 6: 16.

C. To gain some idea of the extent to which Jesus quotes the various books of the Old Testament look up these passages.

Matthew 19: 4 compare with Genesis 1: 27.

Matthew 5: 38 compare with Exodus 21: 24.

Matthew 5: 33 compare with Leviticus 19: 12.

Matthew 12: 5 compare with Numbers 28: 9, 10.

Matthew 4: 10 compare with Deuteronomy 6: 13.

Matthew 4: 15, 16 compare with Isaiah 9: 1, 2.

Matthew 2: 18 compare with Jeremiah 31: 15.

Matthew 24: 29 compare with Ezekiel 32: 7, 8.

Matthew 24: 15 compare with Daniel 11: 31.

Matthew 2: 15 compare with Hosea 11: 1.

Matthew 12: 39, 40 compare with Jonah 1: 17.

Matthew 2: 6 compare with Micah 5: 2.

Matthew 17: 11 compare with Malachi 4: 5, 6.

Matthew 21: 5b compare with Zechariah 9: 9.

Matthew 27: 46 compare with Psalms 22: 1.

In this list, which is not all inclusive, appear all the books of the Law, the Major Prophets, five of the twelve Minor Prophets, and the Psalms.

2. Arrange a debate before the class, or perhaps before the entire school in a general assembly, on the topic: Resolved, That the opportunities for education which Jesus had in Nazareth were better than those given in the rural schools of our own country.

Each side should be represented by two or three individuals, who could have three minutes each for their presentation. A rebuttal could be added if desired. A vote could be taken by the audience on their judgment of the topic as presented, not on which side made the best presentation.

Some suggested points to cover are:

The Affirmative

Unity of life in Jewish background

Advantages of home education

Companionship of parents

Education by the festivals

Less specialization needed

The Negative

Breadth of
curriculum

Equipment

Text books

Extra-curricular
activities

3. Write the third chapter in your book on "The Boyhood of Jesus." Here is a sample chapter written by a junior high school boy. Can you do better?

"The education in the home of a Jewish boy was very important because it helped him in later years

when he was grown up. Jesus was a carpenter because his father was a carpenter, and in that day a carpenter did the work of a mason too. In the synagogue they used a single text book which was the Old Testament. The synagogue and the school was the same building. It was a plain whitewashed building in which the boys sat on the floor and studied their lessons out loud. The scroll of the Old Testament was the spelling book, geography and history book. It contained many stories of the Jewish race.

"The many festivals in the days of Jesus were part of his education. Each week there was the Sabbath which was on a Saturday. The boys learned a lot from their neighbors, who answered questions, and told them about manners, and how to act in public. They learned from the other boys how to play games."

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In a sympathetic effort to understand their religious customs, visit several different religious groups in your neighborhood. Attend a service if possible, and talk with members of the groups. These are suggested: A Jewish synagogue service, a Roman Catholic service, a Christian Science service, an Amish or Mennonite service, an Episcopalian service. After visiting some of these groups, and learning all you can about them, discuss these questions:

A. Did the worshipers seem sincere?

B. Did they evidently secure something of importance and value to them from their religious fellowship and worship?

C. What features were common to the groups visited? List common features, and differing customs.

D. Do different individuals seem to require different types of religious customs and worship programs to meet their needs?

E. Should an individual always join the religious group to which his parents belong? When should he?

2. Did Jesus have the same scriptures that we have?

3. Did Jesus value the Old Testament? How did it help him?

4. How can a study of the Old and New Testaments help us?

5. Discuss whether it is worth the effort to become familiar with the Bible, pro and con.

6. Why is the Bible not studied in public schools?

SECTION IV

AWAY ON A LONG TRIP

We really know very little about the day-by-day events in the life of Jesus as a boy, for our only source of information concerning him is found in the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), and the authors of these writings were not interested in the boyhood and youth of Jesus. Lovely legends grew up about him, some of which are related in the first chapters of Matthew and Luke, and some are found outside our New Testament. But the actual facts we have to go on are very few. We have already noted that Jesus was one of a large family, that he played the games of his time like other boys, that he attended the synagogue frequently, and that he took part in the religious festivals of his people. From his many references to nature and outdoor life we can also assume that he spent much time walking over the hills of Palestine.

It was the custom for Jewish families to go to Jerusalem as often as possible to the annual festival of the Passover, and on this trip Jesus went when he was twelve years of age. Luke has given us a full account of what happened on this memorable occa-

sion which you should read at this point. It is found in chapter 2: 41-50.

THE PILGRIMAGE

The Passover came in the spring time when the whole land was beautiful with growing grass and flowering fruits. The hills were covered with wild flowers, and the streams, which were often dry and bare, were filled with rushing water. Parties from Nazareth set out for Jerusalem three to five days before the beginning of the great festival. The distance traveled was about eighty miles, and though some rode on the backs of donkeys they moderated their pace so as not to hurry the multitudes who went by foot. At night a party camped out in the fields, eating food they had brought with them. As they went further south, others joined them from many towns along the way, and from such distant places as Damascus, Asia Minor, and even from Europe. A boy of twelve would take great delight in slipping from campfire to campfire listening to men from lands of which he had heard only in story.

At the border of Samaria, the caravans turned east, and, leaving the shorter route, crossed the Jordan River to go southward through Perea, then recrossed the River again at Jericho. This detour reminded every pilgrim of the bitter feud which had existed for centuries between the Jews and the Samaritans. Feeling between the two peoples was so

intense that the Jews would not travel across the territory of their neighbors.

A pilgrimage is not a sightseeing trip, it is a religious journey, and frequently during the day, and about the camp fires at night, the travelers sang the songs which expressed their religious faith. These songs are found within the Book of Psalms of our Old Testament, in a section called "The Songs of the Ascent," Psalms 120 to 134 inclusive. They were as well known to every Jewish child as "America" is known by boys and girls in the United States.

JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE

When Jesus set off for Jerusalem with the representatives of many families of Nazareth, he was on the threshold of manhood, for, in his time, a Jewish boy in his thirteenth year was considered "a son of the Law." That meant that he was old enough to know and keep the requirements of the Law and customs of his people, and that personal responsibility to keep these was now laid upon him.

The climb from the Jordan Valley up to Jerusalem was a steep one, from the bottom of the deep valley to the top of the high ridge of Judea. When the pilgrims topped the hill Jerusalem lay spread before them.

Jerusalem was a walled city, the religious capital of the nation, and the most important city in all the world to the Jewish people. With it were associated

most of the great men of the past, and in it stood the temple to which all eyes turned.

The temple of Herod, not quite finished when Jesus first visited Jerusalem, was the third temple to stand on the same site. It consisted of an elaborate series of courts, within which stood the hall of the main temple. The great altar stood in one of the courts, and upon it offerings of animal flesh, grains, and incense were burned each day as gifts of thanksgiving and repentance.

In addition to being the center of the national religious worship, the temple was used by the great teachers of the time who met their pupils in small groups in various corridors or on one of the porches. The temple was also constructed so that it could be used as a fort; it was a general bank, and somewhere close at hand met the Sanhedrin or major governing body of the nation.

A PASSOVER IN JERUSALEM

Jesus was drawn irresistibly to the temple, and he spent most of his time within its area. His family stayed through the entire festival, which lasted about a week, and they either lodged within the city walls with relatives or friends, or perhaps they joined other pilgrims who were encamped in the valleys about the city itself.

On the day of the great feast, Joseph brought a year-old lamb which would be killed by the priest, then roasted by Mary over the fire, to be eaten in

the evening by the family. Every part of the feast was symbolic of the goodness of God as shown in the long ago when he delivered the Hebrew people from their Egyptian slavery. Bitter herbs were used, and these symbolized the bitterness of the bondage; a paste made of fruits told of the brick making of their ancestors by the Nile; and the lamb symbolized the cost of the escape from their captors. The meal itself was eaten with the family dressed as though going on a journey, and standing about a table, reminding them of the haste with which Moses had led the people into the wilderness on the first pass-over night. Prayers of thanksgiving, and psalms were sung, and before the meal was over Joseph, as head of the household, asked one of the younger children to explain the meaning of the ceremony that was being performed. Thus the customs, and the meaning of the feast, were passed on to each generation.

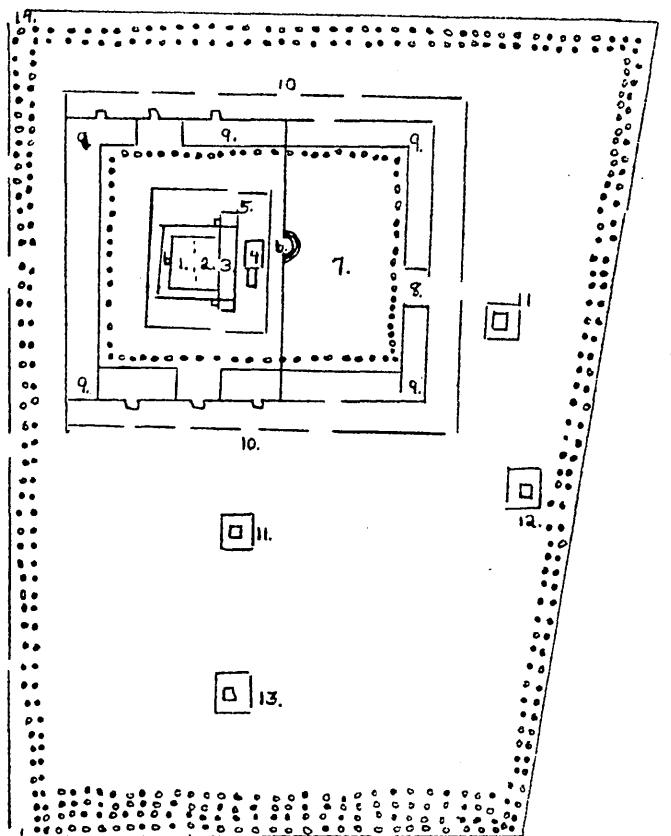
JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

During the days of the festival, Jesus spent his time in the great temple, talking with the pilgrims from many lands, listening to the temple choir as it sang the daily psalms, or watching the sacrifices as they burned on the altar. He joined the groups that gathered around the learned teachers as they conducted public discussions, or answered the questions of their disciples.

Jesus was so intent on listening to the questions and answers of the scholars and their pupils that he

GENERAL PLAN OF TEMPLE AND COURTS

By Virginia Hicks



- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Holy of Holies. | 6. Court of Israel. | 11. Court of the |
| 2. Holy Place. | 7. Court of the | Gentiles. |
| 3. Temple Porch. | Women. | 12. Solomon's Porch. |
| 4. Great Altar. | 8. Gate Beautiful. | 13. Royal Porch. |
| 5. Court of the | 9. Priests' Chamber. | 14. Entrance to Cas- |
| Priests. | 10. Soreg. | tle of Antonia. |

lingered in the city after his family had started home. Luke says that he had been allowed to ask questions of some sympathetic teacher who was willing to listen and talk to a growing boy. It was in the temple that his parents found him when they came to search for him.

Jesus' answer to his anxious mother when she rebuked him was "knew ye not that I must be in my father's house?" This suggests that the mind of Jesus was indeed at the threshold of manhood. But he was not yet ready to take up the full responsibility of manhood. He returned to Nazareth, "and advanced in wisdom, and stature, and in favor with God and man."

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

1. Trace a map of Palestine of suitable size to go in your notebook, and on this mark the probable route the pilgrims took in going from Nazareth to Jerusalem.

2. Turn to the Psalms of Ascent, 122-134. At what time during the pilgrimage to Jerusalem would the 121st psalm be sung? What items in the 122nd psalm suggest that the temple in Jerusalem was the national religious center? When might this psalm be appropriately sung on the pilgrimage? Would the 125th psalm be sung at the beginning of the pilgrimage, at the end, or at first sight of Jerusalem? When might the 133rd psalm be sung? Does it refer to the unity of all the people in Palestine, or to the

unity of the Jewish people? Who would appropriately sing the 134th psalm?

3. Of these important individuals in Hebrew history which spent some time in Jerusalem? David, Moses, Solomon, Abraham, Isaiah, Joshua, Samson.

4. How were these individuals especially related to Jerusalem? David, Solomon, Jeremiah, Nehemiah.

5. Secure copies of Holman Hunt's picture of "Christ in the Temple." It can be secured from The Perry Pictures Company, Malden, Mass., at two cents each for the size, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$, in lots of 25 or more, and at one cent each for size, $3 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$, in lots of 50 or more. The number is 965.

Albert E. Bailey, in his *Studies in the Life of Christ*, suggests questions for you to ask yourself while you study this picture:

Is the building a type of architecture that you have seen before, or an imaginative type?

What does such a building suggest as to age? Costliness?

What is the center of interest?

What do various faces of the Rabbis suggest?

What does the disregarded beggar at the door suggest?

What does the blind Rabbi holding jealously the scroll of the Law suggest?

Are the parents anxious? Does Jesus want to go with them?

Does the figure of Jesus suggest strength? bewilderment? thoughtfulness? obedience?

After a careful study of the picture paste it in your notebook.

6. Study the diagram of the Temple of Herod which was made by a junior high school girl.

What about this building made it seem "a house of God" to the Hebrews?

What is there about a Friends Meeting House that suggests we can find God there?

Do you think we achieve such a feeling as easily in our Meeting Houses as the Jews did in their temple?

7. Write the fourth, and last, chapter in your "Boyhood of Jesus," calling it "A Pilgrimage to Jerusalem," or "A Journey During Jesus' Boyhood" or some similar topic.

8. Bind your book on the "Boyhood of Jesus," and arrange for some exhibition of those made by members of the class. Perhaps a committee may judge them for originality, and completeness of detail.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Read again Luke 2: 40 and 52. The words here are often taken to suggest the many-sidedness of life—physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual. How does one grow in these different sides of life? Are they developed entirely apart from each other, or as a whole? Explain your meaning.

2. Discuss whether the words used by Luke in 2: 48, "they were astonished" mean the parents of

Jesus were surprised to find him in the temple, or that they were surprised to find that he was so interested in religion and anxious to know more about it.

3. List some of the questions a boy of twelve might ask older leaders who were sympathetic in their attitude toward him.

4. Goodspeed translates Luke 2: 51, 52, "And he went back to Nazareth and obeyed them. And his mother treasured all these things in her mind. As Jesus grew older he gained in wisdom and won the approval of God and men."

Does this suggest that Jesus was other than a normal boy?

What kind of a person must an individual be to "win the approval of God"? Name six characteristics necessary.

What kind of a person must a boy or girl of twelve be to win the approval of his companions? Name five things he must not do, and five character traits he must possess to do this.

PART II

WHAT JESUS DID

SECTION V

THE MAN WHO PREPARED THE WAY FOR JESUS

About the year 27 A.D. a new teacher began to preach in an isolated spot in the Jordan Valley, near the entrance of the river into the Dead Sea. This teacher was John, called the Baptizer or Baptist, and he made a tremendous stir in Palestine.

To the Hebrew people the idea of a prophet was a familiar one. During the early centuries of their history, whenever a great crisis faced the nation, there had repeatedly arisen teachers who warned the nation of its dangers, and who pointed out the way to safety. These teachers were called prophets, and they spoke with the assurance that their message to the nation was in reality God's message for the people. Often they were not listened to by the leaders of the day, and frequently they met with all kinds of persecution and hardship. The prophet Amos, for example, was driven out of the country, Jeremiah was stoned to death, and Isaiah, according to tradition, was sawn in two. Many other prophets had to endure ridicule and scorn. With wonderful courage, however, these prophets declared their mes-

sage, and when they were not listened to or heeded, their disciples preserved and treasured their words, many of which found a place in our Old Testament.

In 27 A.D. no one dreamed a prophet would appear. It had been several generations since such a teacher had spoken, and the people had decided that God no longer intended to speak through these men. Many Hebrews felt the words already recorded in the books of the Old Testament were sufficient for the guidance of the nation. Yet John the Baptist came as a prophet. His appearance was even more dramatic because his manner and dress were like that of one of the earliest prophets, the prophet Elijah.

Perhaps John deliberately copied the manner of the prophet Elijah, who had lived in the 9th century B.C., in order to attract attention to his work. Or it might have been that John the Baptist was influenced by a party of the people called the Essenes. These men felt they could live righteously by withdrawing from the ordinary affairs of life, and by living in monastic communities out on the edge of the desert. They used no money, kept no slaves, never married, and held all things in common. They wore white garments, and washed themselves several times a day so that they would feel religiously clean. It is doubtful if John was a member of this party, but he had some things in common with them.

John the Baptist suddenly appeared in the hot valley of the Jordan preaching to the people in words as stern and strong as those of the ancient

prophet Elijah. He was dressed in the rough manner of the desert people, and not in the cultivated style of the citizens of Jerusalem. He wore a garment of camel's hair, a rude shepherd's coat, and his food mainly consisted of honey and locusts. The Baptist spoke in a voice of thunder, and his message was one that made men tremble.

THE FORERUNNER

The Hebrew people always felt that they were the children of God in some special manner. In the teachings received from the prophets and law-givers they felt God had disclosed His will for men as had not been shown to other nations. But in spite of this closeness to God, the land of Palestine had suffered invasion many times by stronger nations, and the Hebrews had not remained as an independent nation through the larger part of their history. The overlordship of the Romans, in the time of John the Baptist, was a great hardship on the Jews, and many of them were convinced that in some way God would soon rescue them from their difficulties.

The manner in which God would rescue His people remained a puzzle to the wisest leaders, and many different ideas flourished concerning it. Some leaders said that God would make a new king from the ancient house of David, and that this king would lead a bloody revolution against the Romans, driving them out of Palestine. This had been done in 164 B.C. by the Maccabees when they overthrew the

Greeks. But other leaders felt that God's agent would not be a man but a supernatural being from heaven who would lead the nation against its enemies. And others simply said that a great teacher or prophet would arise, and so impress other nations by his message, that the conquerors would adopt a new way of living and become worshipers of Jehovah.

When John the Baptist began to preach, the news of his teaching quickly spread over all the country. John declared that the time was close at hand when God would come to the rescue of his mistreated people, and that happier days would come for them. With fierce words he warned his listeners to repent of their sins and to prepare themselves for the better way of living which would be required of those who would enjoy the new kingdom.

"Who is this John?" men began to inquire of one another. Some said that John must be the forerunner who was expected before the Messiah or Commissioned One should come. Others declared that he must actually be the long-expected leader himself. But most of the people thought that John was a new prophet, such a one as had not appeared in Palestine for many generations.

THE NEWS REACHES NAZARETH

Men flocked to hear John the Baptist preach. Those, who believed that he was right in declaring that God's kingdom was soon to come, confessed their sins and were baptised in the River Jordan.

This was a symbol that they had turned from the old way of life and planned to live more worthily. Returning from the Jordan, these men carried news of John's preaching all over Palestine. When the news reached Nazareth, Jesus, the carpenter, turned the shop over to one of his brothers, and set out for the place where John was teaching.

READINGS, PROBLEMS, AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Matthew 3: 1-12 and Luke 3: 7-14.

What did John mean in verse 2, and 8, 9 and 10, as reported by Matthew?

Very little of John's teaching, concerning the manner in which he thought God wanted men to live, has been preserved. Luke gives John's requests of three classes of people. What were the three classes, and what did John request of each? See Luke 3: 10-14.

2. From the following passages in the Old Testament, see how dramatic, and how courageous the prophets were. Note also their high demands for better living.

Chapter 3 of Amos; also chapter 4: 12, 13, and 5: 14-23.

Isaiah 5: 1-7.

Jeremiah 19: 1-3, 10, 11; also 26: 8-19.

3. From reading in the book of Malachi see why men said John the Baptist must be the forerunner of the Messiah, or Elijah come to life again. Malachi 3: 1-3; also 4: 1 and 5.

4. In Palestine it was the custom for the farmers

to harvest their wheat and then take it to some rocky ledge to thrash. With wooden pitchforks they would toss the wheat into the air, and the wind blowing over the exposed ledge would carry the chaff away and leave the heavier grain to settle to the thrashing floor. How does John make use of this illustration? See Luke 3: 17.

5. The severe trials through which the Hebrew people had passed during their history created, to some extent, the feeling that they could do little to better conditions themselves, and that only through God's direct interference would they ever find relief and a better world.

How do we expect to build a better world today?

List ways in which life could be happier and better for people in the United States. What conditions would need to be changed? How can these changes be brought about?

Are there any changes outside of the United States which our country could help bring about which would make for a better world?

6. John used baptism to signify that those baptised had turned their backs on their old ways of living and had pledged themselves to start a new and better way of life. Do you think such a symbolic practice is valuable? Is it necessary?

SECTION VI

JESUS UNDERTAKES HIS LIFE WORK

Jesus joined the multitude of people who came from all parts of Palestine to hear John by the River Jordan. Until this time we can think of him as spending the years helping in his father's shop, and afterwards taking over the entire support of the family. These years of labor are reflected in many ways in the later teachings of Jesus and we are to think of him during the period of youth and early manhood as continuing to "grow in favor with God and man."

After hearing John the Baptist preach, Jesus also asked to be baptised. During this ceremony he passed through an experience which changed the course of his life, and soon sent him forth as a prophet of the Kingdom of God. We do not know whether Jesus felt God had some special task for him to do before his baptism or not, but his baptism, and the later days of meditation and prayer in the Wilderness, certainly crystallized his thought. He became convinced that God called him to a special task, and that He would grant him the strength and insight to accomplish His purpose.

JESUS FACES HIS CALL

Most men who have become great leaders of mankind have found it necessary, at some time during their lives, to spend a long period in careful study concerning the ways and means by which they could accomplish their purposes. St. Paul on his conversion to Christianity spent some months in the Arabian desert, and Siddhartha Gautama, founder of Buddhism, spent a long time in isolation before he gathered disciples to spread his teachings. In similar manner did Jesus, after the experience at his baptism, withdraw to the desolate, lonely country known as the "Wilderness of Judea," and think over his call and the means by which he would carry out his mission.

In the Wilderness of Judea, Jesus faced alone some of the problems which now confronted him. This period is called the Temptation. The disciples who later heard of this experience from Jesus and, in turn, told it to those who wrote it down, did so in the vivid picturesque fashion used by men of the orient in the first century. In that far-away time men believed that God ruled His world through the aid of good spirits who were His agents and messengers, usually thought of as angels. They also thought that God had a powerful enemy, Satan, who sought to overthrow the good which God created, and to trouble men. As helpers, they thought Satan had a host of evil spirits or demons. So to the disciples,

the temptation of Jesus became the struggle of the good angels with the evil spirits who sought to win Jesus to their side. Satan is pictured as tempting Jesus away from the good purposes of God, and the angels are said to have "ministered unto him."

THE THREE GREAT PROBLEMS

At the very beginning of his career Jesus faced three great problems. The first might be called the temptation of selfishness. Jesus believed that God had chosen him for a special task; if this was the case should he not expect to live a happy, comfortable life, and was it not fitting for him to use any special powers he possessed for his own comfort? This problem might be applied, also, to the nation. If the Hebrew people were especially dear to God, would it not be right for Jesus to try to secure more food and comforts for them at any cost?

The second problem might be called the temptation of power. A century and a half before, the Maccabean leaders had gathered the people about them and by force of arms rescued the nation from the Greeks. Then Simon Maccabeus became the ruler of the Jews. Should Jesus seek to become a ruler or king, or should he be the servant of his people?

The third problem might be called the temptation to use wrong methods. Should Jesus frighten the people into listening to him, or make them think

he had magical powers which no ordinary man possessed?

JESUS RESISTED TEMPTATION

When Jesus was baptised he felt within himself the assurance that God had called him to a chosen task, and that, in some manner, he stood in a close personal relationship to his Heavenly Father. To the ancients the dove was the symbol of the spirit of God, and in some of our churches today the dove is painted upon the walls to suggest the same thought. So in the story of the baptism, the dove is pictured above the head of Jesus, to suggest that the spirit of God descended upon him at that time. In later years Jesus told his disciples that on the occasion of his baptism he felt within himself the certainty that he was "the beloved Son of God."

As we shall see in Part III, Jesus taught that all men had within them the possibilities of living as sons of God, and that God was the Father of all men. When he faced the temptations in the Wilderness, Jesus evidently made his decisions on the basis of necessary action. He would not do that which was unworthy of a son of God. On this basis Jesus refused to live selfishly, to make himself a captain or king, or to use pageantry or fear to win a hearing for his message.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Mark 1: 9-13.

What was there in the preaching of John the Baptist to stir Jesus, and cause him to go to the Jordan River to hear him? Jesus had asked questions before of what men outside of Nazareth?

2. Compare the account of the experience of Jesus at his baptism and the experience of the prophet Isaiah in the temple, told in Isaiah 6: 1-8. In what points are the two experiences similar? Are there any differences?

3. As we shall see later, Jesus was very familiar with the Old Testament. When he came to describe his experience at his baptism to his disciples, would the remembrance of such passages as Psalm 2: 7 and Isaiah 61: 1 help him to explain what had happened?

4. Did Jesus solve all his problems in this one temptation experience, or have we reason to feel that at various times in his ministry, he found hard problems facing him for decision? Read Luke 4: 13; Luke 6: 12, 13; Mark 14: 32-34.

5. What answer did Jesus give to the first, second, and third temptations? Read Luke 4: 1-12.

6. What kind of a man would Jesus have been if he had yielded to the first temptation; the second; the third?

7. Throughout his life Jesus refused to make people good (a) by law, (b) by force. Will these methods work? Discuss both sides.

8. What effect would the decision of Jesus to take up a special work have upon his relations with (a) his occupation, (b) his family, (c) other people?

9. Write on slips of paper, without signing your name, the three most difficult temptations you think high school people face. Let the teacher collect these, and next week discuss them, and their solutions.

SECTION VII

JESUS BEGINS THE WORK OF A PROPHET-TEACHER

JESUS BEGAN WHERE JOHN LEFT OFF

When Jesus returned from the Wilderness, the first news to reach him was the news that John the Baptist had been arrested and placed in prison by Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee and Perea. John the Baptist had told the soldiers, the tax collectors, and the religious leaders, that they were ruthless, extortioners, and hypocrites; and when he heard that Herod had sinned against the Jewish law by sending away his first wife and marrying Herodias, the divorced wife of his brother Philip, he did not hesitate to declare publicly that the ruler was a sinner. In anger, Herod imprisoned John in a gloomy dungeon at Macherus, and later on, at the request of Herodias, Herod put John to death.

On hearing the news of John's imprisonment, Jesus began his work as a teacher. It is interesting to note, as a further mark of the influence of John upon Jesus, that Jesus began to preach with the same words that John had used by the Jordan, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JESUS AND JOHN

Although Jesus began where John left off, there were important differences in his message and in his manner of teaching. Jesus agreed with John in the necessity of "repentance." That is, both insisted that men must examine themselves to see how inadequately they were fulfilling the will of God, then turn their backs on their former conduct, and, with God's aid, live better and more noble lives. Then Jesus added a new note concerning the coming of God's Kingdom. John had urged men to repent with trembling and fear of coming judgment; but Jesus declared men were to turn their backs on the past and with glad rejoicing welcome the coming rule of God. The word "gospel" means good news; so Jesus began to teach with the words, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel (good news)." Jesus thought of God as the loving, forgiving Father, and therefore men need not fear His rule, but should rejoice at its approach.

In another way Jesus differed from John the Baptist. John had spoken in a desert spot isolated from the busy, bustling life of the people; but Jesus settled in the important city of Capernaum, and made many trips to different parts of Galilee, and later to Jerusalem. He did not go away from men, but went to them wherever he could find them,—in the synagogue, in the market place, in the fields, in

their fishing boats, and in their homes. Everywhere he went, eager people crowded to hear him, and to them he gave new courage, new strength, and new hope.

JESUS AND THE PROPHETS

The prophets of olden times had spoken very sternly to the nation whenever they felt the people were not faithful to the laws in their sacred books. Jesus began with the same stern message of warning. He did not make light of evil ways of living, and he warned men repeatedly to turn from wicked ways and make their lives more in accord with the demands of God. He pointed out that God as Judge must mark their deeds. In all this Jesus was a spiritual descendant of the prophets of Israel and deserves to be numbered as the greatest of these. Jesus, it is true, expresses a note of tenderness and forgiveness which marks him off strongly from some of the prophets, and yet traces of this thought of God can also be found in Hosea and Isaiah. Thus Jesus, as the greatest of the prophets, repeated their work of demanding right living; but he stressed the loving kindness of God only as a few of the most spiritually minded men of the past had done. Then Jesus went further, and in his own life demonstrated how men could truly live out the requirements of God.

JESUS AS A FRIEND OF THE WEAK

In the early days of his ministry, Jesus gave special attention to those whom men of the time called "sinners." These were the men and women who had broken the laws of society, who in anger or weakness had cut themselves off from other men, and who suffered from the results of their mistakes. To such men and women Jesus went with the same call of repentance and preparation. "Turn your back on your old ways," he said to them, "and you will have the power to live a new life that is totally unlike what you have known in the past." The outcasts often longed for deliverance from old habits and ways, but they did not know how they could start anew. Jesus gave them the inspiration and strength to break with their old way of life, the vision of a new type of living, and the power to make this new way of life a reality. He seemed to call forth from within these hardened men and women new streams of life and power; and they became what the world has since called "twice-born men."

In Jericho there was a little, selfish, hard man named Zacchaeus. He was a tax collector and had grown rich by taking from people more than they should have paid. Everyone hated him. Zacchaeus felt uneasy for he knew there was a better way to live, but could not find that way. One day he came in contact with Jesus, and under the influence of the

prophet-teacher Zacchaeus turned over a new leaf and became a new man.

Wherever Jesus went, those who had been weak and had made mistakes came to him, and went away with the old desire for evil gone, determined to build anew a nobler life.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

As in Part I, it is not expected that sufficient attention can be given in one class period to secure the greatest value from the "Readings, Problems and Discussion."

1. Unlike John the Baptist, Jesus did not confine his teaching to one locality. By studying a map and locating the following towns, see how widely he traveled,—Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Nazareth, Nain, Dalmanutha, Caesarea Philippi, at least one village in Samaria though it remains unnamed, through Perea, Jericho, Bethany, Jerusalem.

2. Find out what impression Jesus made on the largest city in his native province of Galilee. Read Mark 1: 21, 22, 28, 32, 33.

3. Did Jesus come in contact with many different groups, and how did he impress them?

Mt. 4: 23-25 in the synagogue

Mk. 2: 1, 2 in the city

Luke 5: 17 among the learned men

Mt. 9: 9 at the toll gate

Mk. 3: 7-9 the multitude gathered on the beach

Mk. 6: 31-34 a tired multitude by the lake

Mt. 5: 1, 2 on a mountain side

Mt. 8: 5-10 a Roman Captain in Capernaum

4. Although the prophets spoke sternly against evil conduct, they also showed how God continued to love his people.

Read Jeremiah 31: 10-14

Read Isaiah 35: 1-10, Isaiah 40: 9-11.

The Psalmist even more fully expressed the love of God for His children. Read the 23rd Psalm; Psalm 27: 1-3; 46: 1-3; 95: 1-7.

5. Read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19: 1-10. What was there in the way in which Jesus treated Zacchaeus which brought about a change in his life? How did Zacchaeus begin to show his changed life?

6. Read the story in Luke 7: 36-50. What was there in the manner in which Jesus treated this woman which called forth the best within her? How did the woman begin to demonstrate her changed life?

7. We have spoken of Jesus as a prophet. In the following verses, individuals, and the people themselves, speak of Jesus by this title. Luke 24: 19; Mark 6: 14, 15; Matthew 21: 10, 11, 46.

SECTION VIII

JESUS CHOOSES HELPERS

SPREADING HIS MESSAGE

Jesus had certain ideas which he wanted to have his people understand. How should he spread his message? There were no radios, no telephones, no printing presses, and no newspapers in his day. Books were made, but each book had to be copied by hand, which was a very long and expensive task. The only other means of spreading ideas was by word of mouth; but no man could reach all the little villages of Palestine alone.

JESUS GATHERS HIS DISCIPLES

Like all great teachers, Jesus gathered about him a group of followers to assist him in his work. Later, twelve of these men were called Apostles. These twelve joined him in the beginning of his ministry and they spent all of their time with him, but many others could only give short periods of time to listen to him or to go out and repeat his words. Our New Testament speaks of seventy disciples who went out two by two to speak in many small villages. A group

of women also joined the movement, and for their help are sometimes spoken of as "the ministering women."

THE TWELVE

It is interesting to note the kind of men who became the closest friends of Jesus, and his best assistants. They were outdoor men, mostly farmers and fishermen, with one tax collector, Matthew Levi. None of them were wealthy, none of them were from the class of trained religious leaders called the Pharisees, and none of them belonged to the priestly class, or nobility, called the Sadducees. All, but Judas, were Galileans. At least three of them had been followers of John the Baptist before they joined Jesus in his work.

They were ordinary men, who, under the influence of Jesus, became great men. After his death they carried on his work of teaching, traveling into many distant lands. They were put in prison, several of them were killed; and yet, with the fearlessness of their leader, they took his message into many lands which Jesus never visited.

Peter, for instance, traveled through Palestine, and Asia Minor, to Italy and was there put to death by the Romans. James was put to death in Palestine by King Herod Agrippa. John labored in Asia Minor and probably was a martyr. Andrew, according to tradition, was killed by the Romans in Greece. Thomas, Thaddeus, and Philip traveled in Palestine,

Africa, and Asia, and each was put to death for his faith.

These men all loved Jesus, and he called them friends and not servants. Often they misunderstood him, sometimes they were weak, but in the end all but one became heroes.

HOW JESUS WON PEOPLE TO HIM

Dr. Walter B. Denny says this about Jesus: "The simplicity and straightforwardness of his speech, the manifest sympathy and tenderness of his manner, and his fearlessness in maintaining his stand in the face of opposition, all attracted people of every sort to him. And the most favorable impression grew deeper upon closer acquaintance. Those who responded to his first appeal found in him a comrade and a teacher whose genius for friendship held them even when they found themselves unable to rise to the full height of his demand upon them." (*The Career and Significance of Jesus*, pages 134-135.)

NOT ALL WOULD FOLLOW

Jesus could not always win men to be his disciples. On one occasion a splendid young man came and asked Jesus how he could live the right kind of a life. Jesus told him to give up his money, because he was very rich, and come and follow him on the same footing with the other disciples. But the young man was unwilling to give up the comfort and

security which his wealth gave him to join the fishermen as one of Jesus' intimate friends.

After he began to teach in Capernaum and his fame was spreading all over Palestine, Jesus' brothers came to visit him. They were frightened when they heard that certain important people were unfriendly to Jesus, and they urged him to stop his work and return to Nazareth and be a carpenter again. It must have been a great disappointment for Jesus not to have any help from his own family. After his death, however, his brother James became a Christian and for a time was the head of the church in Jerusalem.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. How did Jesus appeal to the first four men who became his disciples? Read Mark 1: 16-20. How were they to change their trade?

2. Were these fishermen poverty-stricken? Read Matthew 4: 22 and Mark 1: 20.

3. Jesus did not call the Twelve until he had been with them some time, and then only after a night of prayer. These men were also called Apostles, which means messengers or delegates, while other followers were known only as disciples, which means learners. What qualities would Jesus desire in his Apostles? List the most important ones.

4. What advantage, in the way of training for future work, did the Apostles have which other disciples did not have?

5. How can a junior high school student show he is an admirer of Jesus today?

6. Read the story of the man who would not follow. Mark 10: 17-22. What did he lose? List the advantages and disadvantages of discipleship for him.

7. Why was no woman listed among the Twelve Disciples? Do women work as hard for the Church or Meeting today as men? Do they hold as important positions in all religious societies?

8. Did the refusal of his family to help him discourage Jesus? Read Matthew 12: 46-50, and Mark 3: 21.

9. What discouraged some other men whom Jesus called, so that they would not follow him? In each case how would you say this in the language of today? Luke 9: 57, 58; Luke 9: 59, 60; Luke 9: 61, 62.

10. According to the definitions in Number 3, would these individuals be classified as disciples or apostles? Wilfred Grenfell, Albert Schweitzer, T. Kagawa, Jane Addams.

11. What does Whittier suggest in his poem:

"In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian Sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow thee."

SECTION IX

JESUS AS TEACHER

JESUS AS A TEACHER

We have already seen that Jesus was first of all a teacher. He desired to tell people his "good news" about God, the Father, and the manner in which men could live as His children. This message Jesus gave in as many places and in as many ways as he could.

Jesus sometimes taught in the synagogues, especially in the early part of his ministry. It was his custom to spend the Sabbath in the synagogue and he was frequently asked to read from the Old Testament and explain the passage he had read. On such occasions he showed how the history of his people spoke of God, how the great men of the past understood Him. Often Jesus carried the thought of the scriptures on to higher levels.

After Jesus became famous, many people came to listen to him, and he spent long hours in the fields, or on the mountain teaching those who flocked to him. But more often he used the occasion of a friendly visit, a dinner engagement, or a chance

meeting to spread his message. Naturally his disciples had more opportunity than any others to hear Jesus speak. They heard him say the same thing in different words several times, or with new illustrations. If they were puzzled, they had the opportunity, when they were alone, to question him further and to clear up any doubts or difficulties that were in their minds.

Jesus did not speak as did the Rabbis of the day, who were the professionally trained scholars. He spoke with a freshness, an enthusiasm, and a force which made the multitude "amazed at this teaching."

Jesus was not a lawgiver as was Moses. He did not draw up a set of rules and tell the people that such rules must be observed if they were to carry out the will of God. Rather, he gave great principles which he expected his followers to apply in the right spirit when need arose. Jesus spoke of God, of the Kingdom or rule of God, of right living, of brotherhood, of the great worth of each person; and from these teachings he expected each person to build up his own conduct in life.

Perhaps as important as what Jesus taught was what Jesus did. What he taught he lived out in his own life. He showed the world what sonship to God, what brotherhood to man, meant; he demonstrated forgiveness, mercy, unselfishness, courage, kindness and love, day by day as he taught in the villages of Palestine. He lived what he taught.

HOW JESUS TAUGHT

Jesus was able to make people understand and remember what he taught by the clearness with which he spoke, and by the stories and illustrations which he gave. He used common incidents familiar to all his hearers to drive home the point he wanted to make.

One time, while Jesus was walking with his disciples in the fields, he stopped, and pointing to a farmer who was sowing his seed, said, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow, and as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside." Naturally everyone stopped to listen, and as they watched the sower continue with his work, Jesus pointed out further that some seed was falling where the weeds were growing rapidly, that some of it was falling where the soil was very thin, and that some was falling on good black soil. Then he swiftly reminded his hearers that the minds of men received his teachings in different ways, some not hearing his words, some hearing with enthusiasm but soon losing their faith, while some heard and had their lives changed.

On another occasion some one of the group mentioned the fact that a man had found a rich treasure of gold which had been buried by another and lost during one of the many invasions of Palestine. Jesus turned this information to an illustration on the value of right living.

Once Jesus stood watching a fisherman bringing

in his nets, and separating the good fish from the bad. This keeping of the good and throwing away of the bad, Jesus used as an illustration of the fate of men.

One spring Jesus and his disciples passed by a field in which a mustard plant was growing. As they noted the surprising growth of the plant from a tiny seed, Jesus called their attention to the manner in which the Kingdom of God would grow from a small beginning until it covered the world.

Often Jesus told stories that came to him from boyhood memories. He spoke of the work of the leaven as he had seen it bubbling through the dough and finally making the loaf rise, as an illustration of the manner in which the Kingdom of God would spread. He remembered what happened when his mother sewed a patch of new cloth upon an old garment, and of the effort of a young bride to find the gold coin her husband had given her as an engagement present. Jesus recalled his work as a carpenter, and from his experience found stories which he could turn to advantage to illustrate his teachings.

Jesus turned events of the day which were being much discussed by the people to new purposes. A tower had fallen suddenly and killed some men. Jesus used this as an effective illustration. A patriot had started a revolution which ended in tragedy, and Jesus mentioned the fact. Not long before, a son of Herod the King had gone to Rome to secure a crown which was almost refused him, and Jesus recalled

this in one of his forceful stories. Jesus turned to account the interesting events of the common life,—feasts and weddings, doings of kings and governors. It is no wonder the multitudes crowded to hear him!

SOMETIMES HE ACTED OUT HIS STORY

Once in a while, Jesus acted out his stories to make them more effective. He plucked a lily and, holding it in his hand, used it as an illustration of God's love. He called a child to him, and holding it in his arms spoke of God's care.

PROVERBS AND BEATITUDES

Oriental people love parables and have many of them. Jesus added new parables which live and still teach their lesson.

"Salt is good," he said, "but if salt has lost its flavor wherewith shall it be salted again?"

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," remains one of the greatest sayings of all time.

"A sound tree cannot bear rotten fruit, nor a rotten tree sound fruit," he declared.

His "blessings" live as the introduction to his famous Sermon on the Mount.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THE HUMOR OF JESUS

Dr. William Byron Forbush once wrote a paragraph describing Jesus' use of humor which reminds us that he did not walk about with a long face, but that his joyous religious faith found use for such a delightful method of teaching as humor.

"One of the most effective rhetorical devices which men can use is humor. The evangelists were serious-minded people, and probably thought humor beneath the dignity of Jesus. They have left us, however, a number of illustrations of the humor of Jesus. You remember how one day Jesus was talking about intolerance. He told His listeners that any one unwilling to make allowances for the faults of another was as if one carpenter should ask his com-

rade to let him remove a splinter from his eye, when he himself had had a timber driven into his own. Speaking of the difficulty which rich men have to handle their wealth, and at the same time to be kind and generous, He pictured a camel loaded with a great bundle, trying to squeeze through the eye of a needle. Ridiculing the punctilious Pharisees, He said that they would strain out a gnat and then swallow a camel. He made light of the readiness with which people followed the most foolish and burdensome requirements of the Pharisees, by saying that it reminded him of blind men trying to lead blind men. His words suggest a number of blind men putting their hands upon each other's shoulders and forming a line behind another blind man, who, leading them along a winding lane in the meadow, topples them all off into the muddy ditch at the side. Humor flashes a sudden light upon a dark subject. It is much more effective than wit. A witty remark causes a laugh, but may hurt the feelings of a listener. Humor causes the hearer to take sides with the speaker." (From Forbush *Life of Jesus*, Charles Scribner's Sons, pages 96, 97.)

READING, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. We can best appreciate the skill of Jesus as a teacher, if we read what he said. The following passages will illustrate the points made in this lesson. Read each suggested section and discuss its meaning and its effectiveness as a means of teaching a lesson.

The parable of the sower, Mark 4: 1-9.

The parable of the hidden treasure, Matthew 13: 44.

The parable of the fishnet, Matthew 13: 47-50.

The parable of the mustard seed, Mark 4: 30-32.

2. Illustrations from home life:

The parable of the leaven, Matthew 13: 33.

The parable of the lost coin, Luke 15: 8-10.

3. Illustrations from current events:

The tower that fell, Luke 13: 4.

The revolution that failed, Luke 13: 1-5.

The man who would be king, Luke 19: 11-15.

4. Illustrations from village life:

The wedding, Matthew 25: 1-13.

Children at play, Matthew 11: 16, 17.

The great feast, Luke 14: 16-24.

5. Stories acted out:

The lilies of the field, Matthew 6: 28-30.

The little child, Matthew 19: 13-15.

SECTION X

JESUS THE MERCIFUL

HEALTH CONDITIONS IN PALESTINE

Perhaps you have had this experience. One morning your younger brother did not feel very well. He complained of considerable pain in his stomach, his face was a bit flushed, and after a time your mother called the family doctor. The doctor came, took his temperature, counted your brother's pulse and finally said, "I think we had better take his blood count, just to be sure." Then the doctor took out his needle and vial, cleansed a spot on your brother's arm with alcohol and, running the needle under the surface, took a few drops of blood which he placed in the vial. After a cheery good-by, he left. But a few hours later the family doctor called on the phone to tell your parents that Henry's blood count was low, and that he was coming up with Dr. Branson, a surgeon, in a few minutes. In half an hour the two doctors arrived, and then, after a brief examination, the surgeon told your parents to take Henry to the hospital immediately where he would soon be waiting for him to remove his appendix which was by

now badly inflamed. You probably did not follow your brother to the hospital, but you learned the operation was successful, and in a few days you went to see your brother who was resting in a white hospital bed. A week or two later he was home, and before long Henry was back in school again as well as ever.

This seems a very commonplace occurrence to us, and yet such a sequence of events would have been absolutely unheard of in Palestine in the days of Jesus. Henry would have died, after terrible suffering, and the neighbors would have said his death was due either to the work of some evil spirit, or because he had sinned and was punished for his sin by an angry God.

In the first century in Palestine there were no hospitals, no institutions to care for the insane, no nurses, no ether, no sterilization, no way to stop bleeding, no means to prevent scarlet fever or diphtheria or any one of a number of diseases that were a terror to the people. Different operations which are common today, or treatment of diseases which save many lives today, could not be imagined in the first century.

There were physicians among the Jews, but there were no medical schools and no scientific medicine. All the physicians knew was what they learned by tradition. The Jews had practically never dissected a human body for fear of ceremonial uncleanness.

Sickness, both bodily and mentally, was believed

to be due to the possession of the individual by an evil spirit or to direct punishment of God for a man's misdeeds. The people of the time thought there was a host of evil spirits always ready to bring suffering on mankind, and if one of these took possession of a man it might mean deafness, blindness, lameness, mental disability, leprosy, or paralysis.

As cures, the physicians of the time used various oils for anointing the injured part, such as mint, nitre, and certain narcotics; they ordered diets of milk, wine, figs and honey, all of which were helpful remedies for certain things. In addition, they gave bitter and nauseating drinks composed of wormwood, and fishgall; and ordered other potents which were supposed to have magical effect, but were utterly useless and perhaps very harmful to the patient. The physicians also told their patients to wear charms about their body to keep away evil spirits, and they repeated incantations or "magical" formulas over them to drive out the evil ones.

Leprosy was fairly common in Palestine, and strict laws were made which compelled the lepers to leave their homes and live in deserted caves outside the cities. They could come to the village gates to beg or receive food, provided they repeatedly cried "unclean, unclean," so that there was no danger of other people coming in contact with them. But many skin diseases, which made sores and broken skin, were confused with leprosy. This meant that often a man was classed as a leper although he

was not one; later he would be cured and readmitted to society.

There was no knowledge of the proper treatment for mental disorders. Sometimes people with severe mental cases were chained in their homes or to rocks in the open country. People in less dangerous condition were allowed to roam at large. Their sickness was also thought to be due to the activities of evil spirits, and by incantations or magic words men tried to drive the evil spirits from the insane man. Sometimes a man would be severely beaten in an effort to drive the evil one away.

Men were intensely superstitious and believed that strong or holy men could drive out the demons by their words. Thus the afflicted individual often came to such men for aid, and some times they were cured because their faith in the holy man was all that was needed to cause them to regain their health. Today there are many people who think they are sick, and feel they have symptoms which confirm their fears, who are cured by confidence in their doctor who actually does little more than let nature take its course. Frequently mental disorders are cured by the strong influence of the quiet, understanding, sympathetic doctor who slowly builds up confidence in himself in the mind of his patient.

THE ATTITUDE JESUS TOOK TO THE SICK

Jesus shared the thoughts of those about him in general. He believed also that there were evil spirits,

and that they were responsible for some sickness. He was familiar with the work of the religious men, pious and noble in many ways, who did cure men who had faith in them. In Matthew 12: 27 he said, "If I by Beelzebub cast out demons (as it was falsely charged) by whom do your sons cast them out?"

Furthermore, Jesus believed that God, the Father of all men, was sorry for all the sickness and suffering in the world, and longed to have His children happy and well. Jesus did not believe that God became angry and sent evil upon men as a punishment for their sins; but that God gladly forgave the wrong doings of those who asked His forgiveness and tried to live an upright life. Jesus evidently felt that God, in a unique degree, worked through him to bring healing power into the lives of those with whom he was in contact. Thus Jesus has at times been called "the good physician" or the "healer of men."

HEALING IN CAPERNAUM

The first day Jesus spent in Capernaum is typical of events in the early part of the ministry of Jesus.

On the Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in the synagogue, when he was interrupted by a man who had a mental disorder. (Mark 1: 21-28.) This man shared the common belief that an evil spirit had taken possession of him and was responsible for all the irrational things which he did. He also shared the faith of others that if a pious religious leader would speak to the evil spirit within him, this spirit would

be driven away. He had heard reports of Jesus, that he was a great prophet, perhaps even more, the Holy One whom God would send to release the people and make a new and better world. Thus when he heard Jesus speak, he was so convinced by what he saw and heard that he felt Jesus had power to overcome evil demons. In his mind he put himself in the place of the evil spirit who, he felt, must know he had met his master. He cried out, as if he were the demon itself, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."

Jesus understood the disordered mind of the man who interrupted him, and, speaking a word of confidence, made the man feel that he was free from the power of the evil demon. The mentally sick man at last gained control of himself, and, at least for the time being, he became a normal person.

PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER

After the service was over, Jesus went to stay at the home of Peter's mother-in-law. She was sick at the time with a fever. Naturally she longed to welcome her famous guest with honor, and wait upon him. So when Jesus came to her bedside and spoke kindly to her she felt strong again, and rose and waited upon her guest.

At once the news of the power God had given Jesus spread all over the town, and before nightfall men sick with many diseases came to Jesus. Many

of them were cured by sharing the confidence which Jesus had, that God forgave them their sins and so released them from punishment; or by the assurance which Jesus gave them that they need no longer fear evil spirits if they put their trust in God.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

To secure greatest value, devote more than one period to the discussion of these questions.

1. When you are sick, do you feel any better when the doctor comes in the door? Do your parents seem to feel differently? Why? If you had no confidence in the doctor would you feel differently?

2. Have you ever met anyone who seemed to be so calm, quiet, and strong that you would wish to be with him if caught in a fire, earthquake, or a great storm? What difference would the presence of such a one make in your own attitude in time of crisis? Why?

3. Sometimes when certain individuals come to a doctor for treatment he carefully examines them, asks them many questions, and then gives medicine which is mostly sugar and colored water. The patient feels much better after taking this "medicine." Why?

4. Some people whom Jesus cured did not wish to go back to their homes, but wanted to travel with him. They felt differently when in his presence than at home. Why?

5. What effect would an acceptance of the faith

of Jesus, i.e. that God was merciful and forgiving, and that He desired His children to be happy and healthy, have upon a normal person? Upon an individual troubled by mental disorder? Upon some paralytic? Upon a man who had made a bad mistake?

6. Were all who came to Jesus cured? Answer, and then read Mark 6: 5.

7. Are insane people ever cured? How is the cure effected?

8. When Jesus cured a sick person, to whom did the people ascribe the power which Jesus used? Matthew 9: 8; Luke 5: 17; Luke 9: 42, 43.

9. A few years ago a liquid was found in the stone cup over the grave of a well-known Catholic priest in Boston. People who dipped bits of cloth into the liquid and applied it to suffering parts of their body were relieved of their pain. How was this possible? Paralyzed people walked, and lame people put aside their crutches. What are we to think of the power of the mind over the body if such cases are proved?

10. Why could Jesus not heal people in Nazareth? Read Mark 6: 5, 6. What did these people lack that they had to have in order to be cured?

11. List all the aids you can think of that doctors and surgeons have today, that were unknown in the days of Jesus.

12. We do not believe that evil spirits cause sickness, but we must remember that men and women in the first century did. Moreover these men and

women of the long ago believed other things possible which seem incredible to us. Here are three accounts of the same event as given by three different authors in the New Testament. Which account would we feel could be literally possible, and which seems incredible to us? Why? To the writers, one way of describing the happening seemed no more wonderful than the other.

Mark 5: 23. Jairus . . . beseecheth him much, saying, My little daughter is at the point of death: I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live. Verse 42. And straightway the damsel arose up, and walked.

Matthew 9: 18. A ruler worshiped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. Verse 25. He entered in, and took her by the hand; and the damsel arose.

Luke 8: 42. For he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. Verse 54. But he, taking her by the hand called, saying, Maiden, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately.

13. Did Jesus think his healing work was the most important part of his work? Carefully read Mark 1: 32-39.

14. For a more detailed study of this subject we suggest following through the series of readings and topics given in *The Life of Jesus* by William B. Forbush, pages 121-122.

"Jesus' attitude toward his wonderful works:

His reluctance as to exhibiting 'signs': Mark 8: 12; Luke 12: 54-56; John 4: 48; 6: 26.

His endeavor to keep them secret: Matthew 8: 4; 9: 30; Mark 7: 36.

His acknowledgment that others could perform such deeds: Mark 9: 38-40; Matthew 12: 27; 24: 24.

His promise that his disciples should do mightier works: John 14: 12.

Why he performed them: Mark 1: 41; Matthew 14: 14; 20: 34.

"How he performed them:

With prayer: Mark 1: 34, 35; 9: 29; Matthew 7: 7, 11.

By co-operation of the faith of the subjects: Mark 9: 23; 10: 52; John 11: 40.

Through prayer of friends: Matthew 17: 21.

With appeal to the sufferer to do something for himself: Mark 2: 11; 3: 3-5; 5: 41.

With healing methods: Mark 7: 32-34; 8: 23-25.

With ceremonial observances: Mark 1: 44.

Followed by forgiveness and the injunction not to sin: Mark 2: 51; John 5: 14.

Limited by unbelief: Mark 6: 5, 6; Matthew 11: 20.

"How his works were explained:

Miracles were a popular expectation: John 6: 28-31; 1 Cor. 1: 22, 23.

By his kindred: He was insane: Mark 3: 21.

By Herod: He was the spirit of John the Baptist: Mark 6: 14.

By the scribes: He was possessed: Mark 3: 22; Matthew 9: 34.

By the people: God had given him power: Matthew 9: 8; Luke 5: 17; 7: 16; 9: 43; John 6: 14."

SECTION XI

JESUS THE MIGHTY

THE FIRST AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Could you explain what electricity is? Try it.

Scientists do not know what electricity is, but we can use it to light our houses, cook our food, ignite the gas in our automobiles, run our trains, and many other useful things. What would Columbus think of music from a radio, of a telephone, an automobile, an aeroplane? The American Indians, in their turn, thought Columbus pulled down lightning from the sky into their guns to slay Indians who tried to harm his men.

It is difficult to imagine how men of other days would feel if they suddenly stepped into our world. And we know that if we could step into their world we would not look at events that happen as they would. We would not believe in demons, we would know the world was round, not flat, we would understand what optical illusions are. Many other things which we could explain to our satisfaction would seem to earlier people as works of magic or deeds that only angels could perform.

Jesus was so beloved by his followers, and so honored, that they were sure there was nothing he could not do. They were sure that he had performed wonderful deeds that no one else could equal, and, after his death, they thought it was still further honoring him to write down all the legends they could find which were told by his admirers. Today, when we read our New Testament, we find it difficult to understand some of these stories, but it will help us if we remember certain things: first, that even now we do not understand all the laws of nature; second, that we must remember that some of the stories written down about Jesus were loving legends; and third, that if we had been present and seen some of these happenings, knowing what we do in the twentieth century, we might have a better explanation for what took place than would those who saw them in Jesus' day.

DANGER BY SEA

Read Mark 4: 35-41 and Mark 6: 45-51. Do the following suggestions help to explain these verses?

Sudden and terrific storms often disturb the waters of the Sea of Galilee, because it is below sea level and the violent currents of air moving over the waters because of this fact make sudden squalls. A recent visitor to Palestine said he saw waves thirty feet high near the old site of Capernaum in the evening, and that in the morning the sea was perfectly calm. One day Jesus was crossing the sea with his

disciples in a fishing boat when a storm arose. Jesus was asleep at the time, but when the waves began to come over the side of the boat his disciples were panic-stricken. When they called Jesus, he was not alarmed. He rebuked his disciples for their panic, and his confidence was so contagious that their courage was restored. They trimmed the sails, and, like good seamen, brought the ship to port.

Would this be easier to understand if we thought the words, "Peace, be still" were addressed to the panic stricken disciples? Can you talk to wind and waves to any effect?

On another occasion, when Jesus was not in the boat, his disciples were caught in a heavy squall, and again they lost their courage and gave up hope. The ship was closer to the shore, however, than they had imagined, and when Jesus appeared in the mist and rain walking on the edge of the shore or on a sand bar, they took new courage and beached the boat in safety. In later years, when the story of that exciting night was retold, they magnified the coming of Jesus and made his approach to them one of walking on the water.

SHARING WITH HIS FOLLOWERS

Some time after Jesus had begun his work in Galilee, Herod Antipas, who had imprisoned John the Baptist, put him to death. In their sorrow, the disciples of John came to Jesus for comfort. Wishing to help them Jesus told them "to come apart

into a desert place, and rest awhile." They sailed across to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, but as they left the multitudes saw them and set out on foot to find them. As it was about six miles around the shore of the Sea of Galilee to where Jesus had taken the disciples of John, he had time for a quiet talk with them before the multitude reached the spot. In the afternoon those who had set out on foot arrived, and Jesus spoke to them until evening. At sunset one of Jesus' disciples suggested that he dismiss the people in order that they might go and find food. Jesus replied, "Give them to eat." The disciples, thinking that Jesus meant to buy food for them out of the treasury, replied that they did not have enough money to buy food for so many people, nor was there any place to purchase it.

Jesus knew that there were no stores from which food could be purchased on that lonely side of the Sea of Galilee, but he also knew that the peasants of Galilee, when they go any distance, always fill the pockets of their belts with dried raisins and olives. So he suggested that the company sit down in small groups, and after they were seated he gave thanks. One little boy had offered to share the food he had, a few fishes and small loaves of bread, and Jesus gave thanks for the spirit of this lad who had caught the meaning of his teaching concerning unselfishness and brotherhood. The people were so moved by the prayer, and by the remembrance of what Jesus had taught, as well as by the example of the little boy,

that all shared what they had with them, and there was more than enough to go round.

Read Mark 6: 31-44 and John 6: 8, 9. This is the explanation of the feeding of the five thousand as given by Dr. Elbert Russell of Duke University. Is this explanation satisfactory? Is it helpful today? Can we practice the example set by Jesus, and followed by the multitude on this occasion? How? If Jesus had, on this occasion, turned stones into bread to feed the people, would he have been true to his decision at the time of the Temptation in the Wilderness?

THE WEDDING GUEST

In the Gospel of John there is a beautiful lesson told in dramatic form, and no doubt meant to be understood as an allegory or dramatic parable by the one who first wrote it. Read the story as found in John 2: 1-11.

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, to which Jesus was invited. At oriental weddings everyone in the village is invited, and the joy and hospitality of the parents is shown by providing a feast for all. Jesus came to the feast, bringing with him many of his followers. To the embarrassment of the parents of the bride, the unexpected numbers present caused the wine to give out. The parents felt that their honored guest would be sure to comment on their lack of hospitality, and that forever afterwards they would feel ashamed. Jesus paid no attention to

the lack of wine, but took a cup of cold water, and blessed it as if it had been rarest vintage. With kindly manner he then blessed the young couple and wished them joy. All forgot the lack of the customary wine, and the entire evening became a joyous occasion.

This explanation of the "changing of water into wine" is an abbreviation of one given by Dr. Lloyd C. Douglas in "Those Disturbing Miracles." Does it have practical meaning today? What effect does a sour person have on a group? If you are enthusiastic about giving a play, and then someone says it is too long, too hard to give, and would cost too much for costumes, what effect does it have on the project? If you plan to give a Christmas party for the neighborhood and your teacher is eager to work out arrangements with you, and suggests plans as to the raising of funds and making an interesting program, what effect does this have on those interested in the idea?

THE BOY OF NAIN

There is another story, told by Luke, which we can understand only as an allegory. It is found in Luke 7: 11-18. Read this story and then also read the story of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15: 11-24, 32.

Jesus ended his best-known parable, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, with the words, "for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost,

and is found." Luke, in the story of the son of the widow of Nain, tells us that once while Jesus was traveling with his disciples in Galilee he met a sad funeral procession coming from a village. A widow was burying her only son. Jesus stopped out of sympathy and, when he heard the story, raised the boy from the dead and gave him back to his mother. If this is an allegory or dramatized parable the meaning is clear. The only son of a widow had done wrong and was "dead" to all the finer and nobler things of life. But when he came in contact with Jesus, the better side of his personality was quickened and, in the end, Jesus restored him to his mother, forgiven and determined to live rightly again.

Can you see how the last verse of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 32, might later be made into a "dramatized parable"? How could Jesus return a boy who had done wrong and suffered for this wrong to his mother a "new man"?

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. The followers of Buddha, founder of one of the great world religions, claim that his disciples saw him walk on water, make food by miracles, and raise the dead? How would you explain such happenings?

2. If a man who firmly believed that God had a work for him to do, was in danger of his life, would his belief tend to steady him and bring him through the danger safely?

3. Do men reason clearly in times of panic? Would you think the reports told by men who have been in great excitement at times of accident would be absolutely accurate? How is it possible that men on opposite sides in court can sincerely testify to contrary facts?

4. Jesus was able to give men courage in times of hardship, confidence that God was caring for them. After his death his followers endured danger, persecution, torture and death in order to continue to spread his words. How was Jesus able to exert such an influence over men?

5. Why does reading about Jesus today make people desire to live as unselfishly and nobly as possible?

SECTION XII

JESUS FACES OPPOSITION

THE BEGINNING OF OPPOSITION

For a short time after Jesus began his work in Galilee he met only with the approval of all those who heard him. People from near and far came to listen to his teaching. We have already noted how the sick came to secure his help from many parts of Palestine. But there were others who were suspicious of the new prophet-teacher. They watched him critically for a time, then gradually their opposition stiffened, and in the end they turned against him and sought to influence the people so that they would no longer listen to him.

FOLLOWERS OF HEROD

Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee and Perea, had put John the Baptist to death, and no prophet could feel safe within his territory. His conscience disturbed him after his execution of John, and he was in no mood to allow another prophet in his land who might condemn him with even greater severity than did John. When it became known that Herod

had knowledge of Jesus, and might lay hands on him, many people became frightened and no longer followed him.

THE SCRIBES

Although the temple was the official center of the Jewish religion, the synagogue touched the life of the individual more closely. This was due to the fact that a synagogue stood in each town, and to it good Jews went each Sabbath day, and on many other occasions.

Influential in the synagogue were the scribes. These scribes were trained men whose duty it was to read and interpret the laws found in the Old Testament. The scribes also served as religious leaders, lawyers, judges and ministers. They were not paid for their work of teaching in the synagogues on the Sabbath, but collected fees for other services. As educators they taught in the synagogue schools and also had private pupils; as judges they used their knowledge of the Law to decide cases brought before them; and as scribes they copied the scriptures and interpreted them.

On the whole, the scribes were held in great honor by the people as their religious leaders and friends, and they represented the best men in the nation. Some of them may have been narrow, intolerant, proud and vain; but as a group they were the religious backbone of the nation.

Jesus came into conflict with the scribes over sev-

eral points. He found some of them eager for the truth he had to teach, like Nicodemus, but others were unable to accept his new interpretation of the scriptures.

THE SCRIBES AND THE LAW

The Jews believed that God had given their nation the books of law found in the first section of our Old Testament. They felt these laws contained all the directions necessary for a man to know how to live uprightly as God desired. But as centuries past, the older laws had to be reinterpreted in order to meet new conditions. These new interpretations were given by the decision of the scribes, and as they accumulated in course of time they were called the "Oral Law"; and the scribes taught that they must be obeyed as fully as the written words in the Old Testament.

The written and oral laws covered almost every action a man could think of, and the scribes felt that a man to be upright must keep each detail of these laws.

THE PHARISEES

In the nation was a body of men who made a special effort to keep all the laws. These men were called Pharisees, and those of their number who were trained as scribes were called Pharisaic scribes. These Pharisees would naturally be suspicious of anyone who did not keep the Law as they did, and it is the

Pharisaic scribes who became the chief opponents of Jesus.

The Pharisees made a special point to avoid being in the company of any who had broken the laws. They did not draw any distinction between the kinds of laws that were broken, but avoided being in the company of one who did not keep the temple worship or the giving of ordered gifts to the temple, as much as they refused to have anything to do with a thief. Therefore when Jesus spent much time among the outcasts and sinners the Pharisees were shocked. Jesus replied to their protests, "A physician goes not to the well but to the sick."

Jesus horrified the Pharisees even more by his attitude toward the Law, especially the "Oral Law." Jesus was not willing to believe that it was impossible to modify the oral interpretations which had become law; and he went even further, and said that certain of the written laws were outgrown and should be changed. Jesus declared that he was true to the spirit of the law, even though he modified it in practice. "Think not that I came to destroy the law," he replied to the protests of the Pharisees, "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."

THE KEEPING OF THE SABBATH

To the Jews, the Sabbath was a gift from God, and they felt that God had told them how it should be kept in every detail. The Sabbath was a day of rest, of religious instruction, and of inspiration. Jesus

believed in the value of the Sabbath as fully as did the Pharisees, but he felt it might be observed in a freer manner than was customary. When the Pharisees protested against Jesus' willingness to heal the sick on the Sabbath, or go to the aid of those in need, saying that such aid was "work" and so prohibited, Jesus replied, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." This interpretation of the Sabbath greatly shocked the scribes and turned them against Jesus.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

The scribes held that a man could secure forgiveness for doing wrong only by repentance and the accomplishment of some penance for his wrong doing. This penance might take the form of a trip to Jerusalem and the sacrificing of a lamb or ox in the temple. But Jesus taught that God would forgive a man just as soon as he turned his back on his evil ways, and tried earnestly to do what was right. A sincere desire to win the pardon of God, shown by humility, by the desire to do acts of love, warranted the assurance of God's forgiveness according to what Jesus taught.

Because of his attitude toward the law, because of his free manner of keeping the Sabbath, and because of his teaching concerning the forgiveness of sin, the Pharisees were opposed to Jesus. Their opposition developed to such a point that they closed the doors of the synagogues against Jesus, and the

majority of the people, continuing to follow their old teachers, turned away from him.

NAZARETH AND HIS OWN FAMILY

The disappointment of Jesus was made deeper by the attitude of his old neighbors in Nazareth, and by the manner in which his own family acted toward him. None of his own family had followed Jesus to Capernaum, and when news reached Nazareth that the Pharisees opposed him, members of his family came to Capernaum and urged Jesus to give up his work. Dr. Goodspeed translates Mark 3: 21, 22, "His relatives heard of it and came over to stop him, for they said that he was out of his mind."

A little later Jesus visited Nazareth and spoke in the synagogue. Before he finished, he was interrupted and his old neighbors drove him out of the town. According to Luke, they would have destroyed him if they could.

THE RESULT OF THE OPPOSITION

As the Herodians and the Pharisees influenced the common people, the multitudes gradually slipped away from Jesus. He was even in danger of his life, and he found it necessary to leave Galilee that he might continue the intensive training of a small group of disciples.

READINGS, QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. The medical profession of France was bitterly hostile to the work of Louis Pasteur for many years. Is there any parallel between their attitude toward Pasteur and the attitude of the scribes towards Jesus? Where are the cases similar?

2. How would you expect a Pharisaic scribe, who had been taught to believe that only professionally trained individuals could correctly interpret the Sabbath law, would feel toward Jesus, who was not a trained scribe?

3. Jesus stood for freedom, inner goodness, and personal judgment, as opposed to ritual, churchly law, and literalism. List the advantages and weakness in his position, and the advantages and weaknesses of the position of the scribes.

4. What is the danger of having laws for every act of life? Can laws make people good? What is the danger in allowing each individual to do what he thinks is right? What are some of the types of law that are necessary?

5. In the account given in Mark 7: 1-7, note one of the minor points over which the scribes quarreled with Jesus. Beside the important things Jesus was trying to do and say, was this matter of any consequence?

6. Read Mark 2: 23-28 for another occasion when the Pharisees disagreed with Jesus. What was his answer to their complaint?

7. Read Mark 3: 1-6. Here is shown the main difference between the interpretation of the use of the Sabbath as given by the Pharisees and by Jesus. What was the test of Sabbath use for the Pharisees? For Jesus?

8. Make a list of the ways in which most people keep the Sabbath that would not meet the test Jesus set.

9. Read Mark 3: 31-34. What did Jesus mean?

10. Read Mark 6: 1-6, and Luke 4: 28-30. Why would this experience be such a bitter one for Jesus?

11. In Luke 4: 17-21 we have an account of what Jesus tried to tell his old neighbors in Nazareth. Study these verses and see if you can find out how this is a summary of what Jesus set out to accomplish.

SECTION XIII

JESUS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

JESUS TURNS NORTHWARD

There were two other reasons, not mentioned in the previous lesson, for the lessening of the popularity of Jesus in Galilee. One of these was Jesus' attitude toward healing. For a time Jesus, out of sympathy and compassion, was willing to do what he could to relieve the bodily or mental suffering of all those who were brought to him. But as their number increased, and the time devoted to them also increased, Jesus turned away from this type of work. His main mission was to teach the people certain truths about God, and to show them how they could live as God desired. The bringing to him of multitudes of sick people finally took so much of his teaching time that he refused to attend to those who were brought to him. He knew that it would be impossible to spread his teachings throughout Palestine unless he had time enough to teach and to train others to give his message. This change in the attitude of Jesus meant that many people no longer came to him.

A second reason why many people ceased to follow him, was because of the ethical teachings of Jesus. His demands were very high, and some of those who came to listen to him turned away, as did the Rich Young Man, because they were not willing to pay the price of true discipleship.

WHERE SHOULD JESUS GO?

Jesus could no longer remain in Galilee. The Herodians, the Pharisees, and the scribes were against him. He could not go into Samaria as the Samaritans as a whole hated the Jews and would not listen to one of their teachers. He was not yet ready to go into Judea. Jesus needed more time to train a small group of disciples so that they would understand his teachings and be able to continue to spread his words if anything should happen to him. So Jesus turned north, and for a period of time traveled in "the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon."

THE NORTHERN JOURNEY

We do not know how long Jesus and his disciples were in the north country, nor just where they went, but during this period Jesus gave his disciples intensive training. They had opportunity, as they traveled through the country, or rested on some quiet hillside, to ask Jesus all the questions that had been forming in their minds, and to have him explain many things that had not previously seemed clear to them.

Few incidents are recorded concerning this northern journey. One is of a native woman, a Greek, who came to Jesus and asked him to heal her little girl who was ill. At first Jesus refused to do this, because he did not feel his work lay among non-Jews, and because the granting of her request would probably mean that many more such cases would come to him for attention and defeat the purpose of his northern trip. But the woman was so clever in her appeal that Jesus finally answered her request.

On another occasion, Jesus interrupted his northern stay to make a visit down the east side of the Sea of Galilee in the area called the Decapolis. Immediately he was again surrounded by multitudes who brought to him those who were deaf, dumb, and blind. Jesus healed them and urged those healed "that they should tell no man." But news spread rapidly, and Jesus saw it was futile to try to teach men spiritual things as long as they were only concerned about physical relief.

The old contention with the Pharisees was also revived when three Pharisees came to him and asked him for a sign from heaven to prove that he was a prophet of God. Wearily Jesus told them that God did not send signs to vindicate his teachers. Then he withdrew to finish the training of the Twelve.

CAESAREA PHILIPPI

After a further time spent outside of Galilee, Jesus came to the conclusion that his most intimate dis-

ciples now understood him sufficiently for him to take them to Jerusalem, and there, at the annual Passover time, to make a supreme effort to win the people to accept his ideas. In the neighborhood of the city of Caesarea Philippi Jesus called his disciples to him and asked, "Who do men say that I am?"

One of the disciples answered that he had heard people say that Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead. Another said that some thought Jesus was the prophet Elijah, who was expected to return to earth before the Messiah should appear. Other disciples declared he was a prophet like Jeremiah or Isaiah. Jesus turned to Peter, who seemed to be the leader of the disciples, and asked, "But who say ye that I am?" Peter exclaimed instantly, "Thou art the Christ."

WHAT DID PETER MEAN?

The word Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word Messiah, or the Anointed One. As we have already seen, there were several varying ideas as to who and what the Messiah should be. Peter apparently believed that Jesus was to be the "Son of David," or descendant of the house of King David, who would become the ruler of Israel and release the nation from bondage to Rome, and cause the people to live in accord with his teachings. This thought was shared by others of the Twelve, as can be seen by the request which James and John made

on the later trip to Jerusalem, when they asked if they might hold important places as officials in the new government. (Mark 10: 35-40.) The people also hoped that Jesus might be what Peter expected, as they cried on his visit to Jerusalem, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David."

Jesus was pleased at the enthusiasm of Peter and replied to his faith in words which could be expressed in our everyday language something like this, "You are right, Peter, and indeed only God could have given you such an insight into my work and teachings that you could recognize who I am. And now I will tell you who you are. You are not Simon, but you are rightly named Peter the Rock, for on such faith and insight as yours I will build, and through such as you my work will continue."

Then Jesus asked his disciples not to tell others that he was the Christ, and he explained further what he meant by the term Messiah. First, he was not a Davidic king, nor would he ever rule as a king over Israel. This temptation he had rejected at the beginning of his ministry. He would not lead a rebellion against Rome which would involve his people in war and bloodshed. Second, he was no supernatural being from heaven, and had no legion of angels to do his bidding. Rather, he found his thought of Messiah in the teachings of the prophet Isaiah, who had told of a Servant of God who would

suffer and willingly lay down his life for his people. "And he began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days arise again."

Jesus meant to continue to announce the true nature of the Kingdom of God, and to urge the people to live worthily of the Divine Fatherhood and Kingship. He would not lead the people in revolt against Rome, however, and he felt quite certain that when he went to Jerusalem and refused to head a revolution that the people would not listen to him any longer. He was also convinced that the Pharisees and scribes would never forget the difference between his teachings and theirs, and that they would try to get rid of him. Jesus felt that if the Pharisees and scribes put him to death, his example of willing sacrifice would make his teachings live with greater freshness in the minds of men, and that his death could not stop his message from spreading among the people.

PETER'S REBUKE

When Jesus expressed these thoughts to Peter, the disciple was horrified to have his master speak of suffering and death. The Messiah, for Peter, was a glorious king, who would rule successfully and with power. He exclaimed, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee." Then Jesus sternly rebuked Peter, and calling his disciples to him he

announced clearly what he meant by true Messiahship and true discipleship, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. Why Jesus could not turn to Samaria for a teaching mission is shown in Luke 9: 51-56. What was the attitude of the disciples towards those who did not agree with their views? What was the attitude which Jesus took?

2. Read the incident of the Syro-Phoenician woman in Mark 7: 24-30. Jesus felt his mission was to his own people. If they were able to absorb his teachings, they, in their turn, could take it to other peoples. Did he have time to go to the Greeks? How did the woman win his aid?

3. On a map trace the possible journey of Jesus and the Twelve in the northland. Note that Phoenicia was outside the political boundaries of Palestine. Was this journey through low plains, or high mountainous lands?

4. Read Mark 8: 11-13 to find out the attitude of the Pharisees. They wanted some supernatural proof that Jesus was a true messenger of God, some miracle performed before their very eyes. Jesus declared that God's truth was not shown by miracles. Once he added, that such unresponsive people as the

Pharisees would not believe the truth even if such a miracle as a man rising from the dead should take place. This parable is found in Luke 16: 19-31.

5. Read with care what happened at Caesarea Philippi, both in Mark 8: 27-35, and Matthew 16: 13-25. What was the test of discipleship?

6. Why would Jesus not want others besides his disciples to know that he was a prophet-Messiah? If they misunderstood what he meant by Messiahship, as had Peter, what would be the result? A revolution? An effort to make Jesus king by force?

7. Read Isaiah 53: 1-12. This is the great Old Testament passage that most clearly expressed the idea that a small part of the nation, or an individual, should suffer willingly to aid the rest of the nation. What verses were really fulfilled in the life of Jesus? Was verse 2 literally fulfilled by him? How can a man by suffering help other people?

8. In what way can these men and women be called "saviors": St. Francis, Abraham Lincoln, Jane Addams?

9. What did Jesus mean when he said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"?

10. What did Jesus mean when he said, "Who-soever shall save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall save it"?

SECTION XIV

THE JOURNEY SOUTHWARD

THE TRANSFIGURATION

A week after the incident at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus took Peter and James and John onto a high mountain for a period of meditation and prayer. Here the little group passed through an experience that greatly strengthened Jesus for the danger that lay ahead of him. As in the case of the baptismal experience, it seems best to explain what happened as a vision, or as something which took place in the inner consciousness of Jesus.

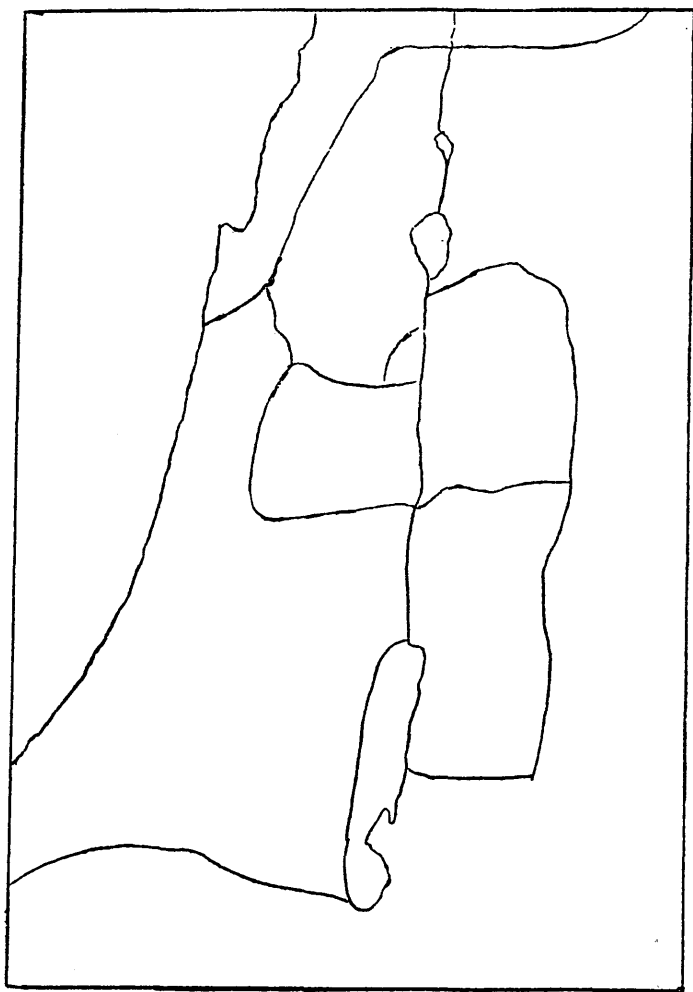
Perhaps the vision came to Peter. He saw Jesus praying in deep earnestness, and as Jesus prayed his face was illuminated so that it fairly shone; indeed all his garments seemed to glisten. Then it seemed to Peter that he saw Moses, the representative of the Law, and Elijah, the representative of the prophets, talking to Jesus. These two great representatives of all that was best in the Jewish religion seemed to express their approval of what Jesus had said and done; and then, as at the baptism, the approval of God was also indicated.

Or, it may be that to Jesus in prayer came the consciousness of the approval of his work by Moses, Elijah, and by God. This sense of assurance was so welcome that, in his new confidence and to strengthen his disciples, Jesus explained his feelings to the three disciples who had accompanied him in symbolic terms.

No sooner had this deep experience come to the little group on the mountain than they plunged back into the ordinary perplexities and problems of the world. For at the foot of the mountain they found other disciples vainly trying to meet the needs of an epileptic lad who had been brought to them to be healed. Their faith in the love of God and in His desire to bring happiness and release from pain was not sufficient for them to help this boy. Jesus, after rebuking his disciples, for their lack of faith, healed the boy.

THEY SET OUT FOR JERUSALEM

The period of intensive training of the disciples was over and Jesus now set out for Jerusalem. He wanted to go to the city and there, in the center of the national and religious life, make a general appeal for his teachings, and his understanding of the Kingdom of God. He hardly expected that the people would listen to him, as they had on other days rejected most of the prophets who sought to teach them. But he felt he must make the attempt, no matter what might happen to him.



OUTLINE MAP OF PALESTINE

On the way, Jesus warned his disciples that he might not be successful, that suffering and even death might await him in Jerusalem; but they were so confident in his leadership, and so certain that others would accept it, that they paid no attention to his warnings.

ON THE WAY

As is the case with other journeys, we do not know the exact route the party took toward Jerusalem; except that they traveled southeast of the Jordan River after leaving Galilee. Then they recrossed the river at Jericho and came to Jerusalem through Bethany. Although there seems to have been an atmosphere of haste and expectancy about this trip, there are several accounts of things that happened on the way.

A scribe came to Jesus and wished to be counted among his disciples. Jesus answered, "The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Other men wished to join Jesus as soon as they had fulfilled certain duties and responsibilities which they felt belonged to them; but Jesus said, "Follow me, and leave the dead bury the dead," and "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

In one village, mothers crowded about Jesus with their little children and begged him to bless them. This the disciples thought was an imposition on

Jesus; but he took the children in his arms, and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not; for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven." "Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter the kingdom of God."

At Bethany, in the home of friends, Jesus reminded one of two sisters, that the most essential thing to give consideration to was the real meaning of life, and not a multitude of petty concerns.

Before the party reached Jerusalem, James and John, or, according to Matthew, their mother, came to Jesus and asked that they might hold important positions in the kingdom that they were confident Jesus was about to establish. But Jesus rebuked them as he had rebuked Peter at Caesarea Philippi, by saying, "Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all."

James and John, and the other disciples, came to the city with excitement and joy, and with their confidence high; but Jesus already felt a deep foreboding concerning his reception. He was not so much alarmed about himself as about the city, for he knew that if his teachings and way of living were rejected by the people of Jerusalem, that it would

mean sadness and suffering for them in the future. "And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another."

THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

As the party drew near to Jerusalem, Jesus secured a donkey, and, seated upon the back of the animal, and surrounded by an enthusiastic multitude, rode into the city. Those about him waved palm branches in the air and expressed their feelings by crying, "Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." The whole city was stirred and Jesus was sure of a hearing for his message.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Mark 9: 2-8 for the Transfiguration experience. What effect would such an experience have on the Disciples? Upon Jesus? Did they immediately tell the rest of the disciples about their vision? Luke 9: 36.

2. Note Jesus' feeling of apprehension concerning what would take place in Jerusalem as found in

such passages as these: Mark 9: 30-32; Luke 9: 43b-45; Mark 10: 32; Luke 12: 50; Luke 18: 31-34.

3. Trace the probable route of Jesus from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem.

4. Read Luke 10: 38-42 for the lovely story of Mary and Martha. What does "cumbered about much serving" mean? Jesus said, "but one thing is needed." What was that one thing?

5. Read Mark 11: 1-11 and Matthew 21: 1-11 for a full description of the Triumphal Entry. What effect would this incident have on the people? The Pharisees? The Disciples? Would this enthusiasm secure a hearing for Jesus?

6. Who did the people in general think that Jesus was? Read Matthew 21: 11. But what did others think his coming would mean? Mark 11: 10.

SECTION XV

EVENTS IN JERUSALEM

THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

After spending a night in Bethany, outside the walls of Jerusalem, Jesus returned to the temple with his followers. Perhaps he had not been in the city since his boyhood. As he approached the temple and entered the outer court he found noise and confusion everywhere. Traders, licensed by the priesthood in charge of the temple, were selling lambs, cattle, doves, and incense to the pilgrims and charging them exorbitant prices. The temple tax had to be paid in coins which did not have stamped upon them the images of any emperor or ruler, since it was unlawful for images to be taken into the temple. Thus the pilgrims had to go to the money changers to have their coins exchanged, and they felt they were charged an outrageous amount for the exchange. In every way the pilgrims felt they were cheated.

Jesus was indignant over these practices. The worship of God required quiet, dignity, reverence, and a worshipful attitude. Instead there was noise, con-

fusion and irritation. The pilgrims argued with traders and money exchangers, and when they went into the court to watch the temple sacrifice and listen to the beautiful chanting of the psalms by the great choir they were in no mood to worship. The priests allowed, and perhaps profited by, the trading and grafting, and there was unseemly confusion in the "house of God."

Striding into the midst of the court, Jesus seized a bundle of rushes or ropes, overturned the tables of the money changers, and drove the merchants themselves, with their animals, out of the temple. "Is it not written," said Jesus, "My house shall be a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers."

JESUS AND THE SADDUCEES

The Sadducees were the priests who administered the temple, and the descendants of the old Maccabean nobility which had ruled Palestine before the coming of the Romans. The priests were supported by the public taxes, and received many other privileges. They were in the majority in the national legislature, the Sanhedrin, and were immensely powerful. It was through them that the Romans maintained their rule in Palestine.

When Jesus cleaned the temple it was a public rebuke to the Sadducees, since they were responsible for what went on in its courts. Originally it may have been a real convenience to pilgrims to pur-

chase their sacrifices, and change their money, in Jerusalem; but graft had evidently grown up about the practice. Thus his actions enraged them. The Sadducees were also afraid that Jesus might lead a popular revolt against the Romans, and whether he won or not they would be deprived of their privileged positions in the tumult that would arise.

THE SADDUCEES ATTACK JESUS

Smarting under the public rebuke administered by Jesus, the Sadducees looked about for a way to get rid of him. For the time being they did not dare arrest and execute him, because he was popular with the pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem with him. So they tried to trick him with questions which would make him absurd in the eyes of the people, or cause him to confess some plot which would enable them to arrest him.

THE QUESTIONS OF THE SADDUCEES AND PHARISEES

The Sadducees first demanded to know publicly whence came Jesus' authority to challenge their administration of the temple. Jesus knew that he spoke and acted with the same authority that other prophets of Israel had acted, a consciousness that God had given him a message to deliver. But he also knew that the Sadducees would refuse to accept this explanation, so he said to them, "I also will ask you one question. The baptism of John, was it from

heaven, or from men?" In this question was Jesus' answer to the one asked him. John the Baptist had spoken and acted with the same inner assurance that motivated all the prophets, as the people recognized. Yet the Sadducees had not followed John, who was popular with the nation. If the Sadducees declared John's authority did not come from God they would displease the people who believed in him; if they admitted John's authority did come from God, then they could not explain why they had refused to follow him. So they answered, "We know not."

Then the Pharisees asked Jesus a question which was supposed to test his patriotism, and to make him lose the confidence of the people. Taking a coin on which was the image of the Roman Emperor, they asked, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" If Jesus said "yes" they thought he would drive the people from him because they hated the Romans; if he said "no" they could arrest him as a revolutionist. But Jesus took the coin and said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

The Sadducees did not believe in life after death, so they next asked Jesus a question which implied that such a belief could not possibly be true. Jesus met their question by a quotation from the Old Testament that showed God to be the creator of the living. God could make new conditions for those who died, Jesus said, just as he had created them in the first place.

The last question came from one of the scribes, the trained teachers of the Law. This scribe wished to know if Jesus would count the great law of Deuteronomy, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," as the first law for the people. This was the law placed in the small box beside the entrance to each Hebrew home, or worn in a small box on the forehead of the Pharisees. Jesus replied, that this was indeed the first law, but that there was "a second like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These two laws, Jesus said, summed up all the teachings found in the law books or in the teachings of the prophets.

Mark records that after this, "No man durst ask him any questions." Instead the Sadducees and Pharisaic leaders decided that they must find some way to take Jesus without the people knowing of their plot. Then they planned to put him quietly out of the way.

THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST JESUS

The Sadducees found at hand a man who was willing to tell them where Jesus spent the nights, so that they might seize him. This man was one of the intimate friends of Jesus, one of the Twelve,—Judas.

Why Judas was willing to betray his friend we do not know for sure. Two explanations have been given, though the New Testament does not give us any clue except to say that "Satan entered into

Judas." One explanation is that Judas was convinced that Jesus was the Davidic Messiah, and that by disclosing this fact to the priests, Jesus would be forced to admit the fact, rally the people, and seize control of Jerusalem and Palestine. The more probable explanation is that Judas discovered that Jesus would not play the part of the Davidic Messiah, and that he would not lead a revolt and take his kingdom by force. Disappointed by this refusal, Judas decided that he would have nothing more to do with Jesus, and he betrayed him to his enemies. In any case, Judas was willing to betray to his enemies for thirty pieces of silver the secluded place where Jesus was spending the night.

OTHER TEACHINGS OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM

While his enemies were seeking to get rid of him, Jesus continued to teach in the city. Some of these teachings we will consider here, and others in Part III.

Jesus did not believe that the beautiful temple, with its elaborate system of public sacrifice, was necessary to the religious life of the nation. Furthermore, he felt that if his way of life was rejected by the leaders, in time there would be discontent, agitation and a final revolt against the Roman authority. On one occasion, when his disciples were admiring the temple, Jesus said, "There shall be left here not one stone on another." Jesus explained, however, that true worship was not a matter of tem-

ple practice, but of the right spirit in the worshiper. "They that worship God," he said, "must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Less than forty years later, the Jewish people did revolt against Roman rule, and, after a bloody war, Jerusalem was completely destroyed.

Jesus taught that the true spirit of religious devotion was demonstrated by an incident he observed one day in the courts of the temple. Wealthy people were coming to the temple treasury and casting in great sums of money as their contribution, but Jesus noted a poor widow who gave her last farthing as her gift. Turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "For they all cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Jesus also took this occasion to warn the people against the spirit of the Pharisees who had attacked him, and condemned them for their love of honors, their pretence, and their hypocrisy. Jesus did not mean that such conduct was common to all the religious leaders, but only to those who blindly refused to see truth where it existed.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Mark 11: 15-17. Why would the Jews not accept as the temple tribute a coin which had on it the image of a king, or a mythical God?

2. Do you think Jesus would find anything in our Meetings or Churches of which he would not approve? If so, what?

3. Why did the Jews burn sacrifices or incense to God? Why have they since given up this practice? What did the ancient prophet Amos say about sacrifice? Read Amos 5: 21-24. What did he think God desired of His children?

4. The animals sacrificed on the altar of the great temple were placed there as sacrifices for the sins of the people. St. Paul believed that the death of Jesus was a similar sacrifice for the sins of the people. Many churches accept this idea of St. Paul. Mark did not hold this idea. How do you think Jesus helps to overcome sin?

5. Read Luke 20: 20-26. What were some of the things that belonged to Caesar? What belongs to God?

6. Some scribes and Pharisees recognized that Jesus was a true teacher, and did not oppose him. This is shown in such passages as these: Luke 20: 39; Mark 15: 42, 43; John 3: 1, 2.

7. Judas was willing to sell Jesus for the ordinary price of a slave. See Exodus 21: 32. Why has Judas stood through the ages as the most despicable character? Do you know the story of the Wandering Jew? What does it teach?

8. What does it mean to "worship God in spirit and in truth"?

9. What is the advantage and disadvantage, as you see it, in these items as part of worship:

organ music

music by a choir

communion

ritual

silence

reading from the Bible

a sermon from one person

brief talks from several individuals

programmed worship

unprogrammed worship

10. In what sense did the poor widow in the story of the widow's mite, "put in more than all these others"?

11. Mark gives us the warning against the spirit of some of the Pharisees in chapter 12: 38-40. Matthew wrote after the open split between the Jews and Christians had made bad feeling, so he uses much stronger language. See Matthew 23: 12-15, 23-29. Many men feel these words of Matthew could hardly have been said by Jesus, or, if they were, they could only refer to a small minority of the Pharisees, perhaps only the leaders in Jerusalem.

SECTION XVI

LAST DAYS IN JERUSALEM

THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY

The Gospel of Mark tells a lovely story of an evening that Jesus spent in the home of Simon, the leper of Bethany. Jesus had come to Simon's house to dine, and while the company sat about the table a woman entered and poured the contents of a vial of precious ointment over the head of Jesus. This unusual act caused a good deal of commotion, and some of those present thought Jesus should rebuke the woman for her extravagance in using ointment which cost some seventy-five dollars. But Jesus praised the woman for her act of love, and declared that her kindly deed would never be forgotten. Her act of loving faith seemed specially significant to Jesus, because he knew the time was near at hand when one of his own disciples would betray him.

THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS IN THE FACE OF DEATH

Even before the last evening spent with his disciples, Jesus was convinced that he must die. The prophets told about in the Old Testament had been

persecuted and often put to death by the rulers of the nation. To the number who had suffered was added John the Baptist. When the people of his own province ceased to follow Jesus in large numbers, he felt that without their backing the Pharisees or Sadducees could easily put him out of the way.

Jesus was willing to trust himself into the hands of his Heavenly Father. He would be true to the message he must teach, and if this should result in his death he was sure that, in some manner, God would use his death to advance his ideals. Jesus knew that the death of Isaiah or Jeremiah had not ended the work of those prophets. Their disciples treasured the messages which had been given, and these grew in power and influence as they were handed down through the centuries. Jesus was confident that his words would be preserved by his followers, and that his example would encourage his disciples to continue his work.

THE LAST SUPPER

Jesus had come to Jerusalem at the time of the annual Passover celebration, the most important week in the religious year of the nation. This religious celebration, which commemorated the favor of God shown to the Hebrew people when they escaped from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, opened with the eating together by a family group of the Passover lamb, some bitter herbs, and unleavened bread. Wine was shared from a common

cup. Jesus was anxious to eat this meal with his disciples, and he made arrangements to eat the Pass-over with them in a secluded place where they would not be disturbed.

THE FOOT WASHING

According to the Fourth Gospel, there was some unseemly haste at the beginning of the meal on the part of certain disciples who desired to secure seats closest to Jesus. Without comment, Jesus took a cloth and basin of water, and, one by one, washed the dusty feet of the Twelve. And only one, the impulsive Peter, protested! At the conclusion of this act of humility and service, Jesus explained that it was his wish to impress upon them the fact that he had come to serve men, and that to be true to his teachings they must continue to serve. "For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you." The same gospel reports another saying of Jesus to the same effect, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13: 34, 35.

THE SUPPER

After the brotherhood had gathered about the table, and eaten the roasted lamb and the bitter herbs, there remained unleavened bread upon the

table and a cup, or cups, of wine mixed with water. Jesus, speaking symbolically of his death, passed the bread and wine to his disciples, and at the same time expressed the faith that when he next ate with his disciples the kingdom of God would have come. He also expressed the wish that his disciples would remember him (his teachings and example) and the kingdom for which he labored, whenever they sat down to eat together.

The Christian Church, as a whole, has believed that Jesus established a new sacrament the last time he ate with his disciples. Thus in the early Christian churches, when members came together to worship, they brought bread and wine, part of which was used in common, repeating the events of the last night that Jesus spent with his disciples. At this common meal those present spoke of the life and teachings of their Master, and pledged themselves anew to continue as his loyal followers. Gradually, however, other elements crept into the "Lord's Supper," until in the minds of many it became an occasion on which a great miracle was performed, and the simple bread and wine became the body and blood of Jesus, sacrificed anew for them. This thought forms the most important feature in the Roman Catholic Mass, although the Protestant Church as a whole regards the Lord's Supper only as a memorial service. The Society of Friends believes that it is not necessary to have a recurring service to recall to mind the work and teachings of Jesus.

THE PREDICITON OF HIS BETRAYAL

Before the conclusion of the meal, Jesus warned his disciples that one of them would betray him into the hands of his enemies, and that all of them would scatter and leave him in a time of danger like a flock of foolish sheep. Peter warmly declared that under no circumstances would he desert Jesus in a time of need, but Jesus sadly warned Peter that he was not as strong as he thought he was. With a good deal of emotion the little company then sang a hymn, and left the house to go to a quiet spot outside the city wall, in the Garden of Gethsemane.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. The lovely story of the anointing at Bethany is told in Mark 14: 3-9. What was it which drew forth Jesus' praise? What symbolic meaning did he read into the act? Can we put money values on deeds of kindness?

2. What parable was Jesus acting out in the Last Supper? Read Mark 14: 22-25.

3. Did Jesus feel that ritual was essential to worship and communion with God? Read Matthew 22: 34-40; Matthew 24: 1, 2.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26. Paul gives us in these verses the oldest account we have of the Lord's Supper, since Paul wrote at least from ten to twenty years before the Gospel of Mark was written. Luke secured much of the information which he used in

writing our third gospel from Paul. Thus he incorporates in his gospel the words of Paul, "this do in remembrance of me." But neither Mark nor Matthew contain any suggestion that Jesus meant his disciples to repeat the supper as they celebrated it the last time together. The Gospel of John has no account of the passing of the bread or wine. Do you think Jesus would have established a "sacrament"?

5. How do Roman Catholics celebrate the mass? How do Presbyterians repeat the Lord's Supper? What help and strength do these groups find in these memorials?

6. Can you find out why Luther and Calvin did not wish to continue to celebrate the Mass?

7. Why have Quakers omitted all sacraments? What have they lost? What have they gained in these omissions?

8. Read John 13: 4-17. Has any church repeated the custom of foot washing? Why has this custom so generally died out? If retained, what would it signify?

9. Study a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. What has Jesus just said? Why are the disciples so startled? Who is declaring his faithfulness? Can you pick out Judas? What does the face of Jesus suggest?

SECTION XVII

CLOSING EVENTS

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

As Jesus left the upper room in the house where the Last Supper had been eaten, he was followed by a young man of the household. It is to this young man that we owe the record of what took place in Gethsemane, and we have good reason to feel that he was Mark, author of the oldest of our gospels.

Entering the Garden, Jesus left his followers on guard while he withdrew among the olive trees to pray. Temptation came to him again as at the beginning of his ministry, though of a different nature. Should he seek safety in flight? Would he be able to carry through to the end if he were tortured and put to death? Would his disciples be able to continue his work without him? Would all that he had taught and died for be lost? These, and similar questions, must have passed through his mind. But finally his faith in the wisdom and goodness of God was so great that Jesus was willing to leave the results in His hands. "Not my will, but thine be done," was the final prayer of Jesus.

The disciples slept while Jesus was praying and did not hear the temple guards as they were guided by Judas to the Garden. They were awakened by the flashing of the torches in the darkness as the guards surrounded Gethsemane, but it was too late to save their master. One of the disciples endeavored to protect Jesus, but was rebuked by him for using a sword. Then the guards led Jesus away to Jerusalem, and the disciples fled into the darkness.

JESUS ON TRIAL

Jesus was first taken before Caiaphas, the High Priest, shortly after midnight. None of his disciples were present, nor anyone who might be inclined to be friendly to him. The Sanhedrin was called into session to sit as a court, though its members had already decided in their minds what would be their judgment if Jesus ever fell into their hands. Throughout this trial, and the second which followed later, Jesus made no effort to defend himself. With quiet dignity, he awaited the sentence which he was sure would be passed upon him.

Jesus had refused to be a conquering Son of David and lead a revolution against the Romans, and so he knew he was not guilty of any crime against the state. He had tried to live as a son of God, and to teach other men to live worthy of membership with him in God's kingdom. This is what he meant when he declared at the trial that he was the Messiah. But he knew the Sanhedrin would not understand

his reinterpretation of the Messiahship, and because of that they would condemn him. This the Sanhedrin did after a brief examination; judging Jesus worthy of death on the grounds of what they considered to be a false and blasphemous claim. Then, since they could not execute the sentence of death, they ordered Jesus taken before the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate.

THE DENIAL OF PETER

While Jesus was being tried, Peter made his way into the courtyard of the High Priest. Here he was detected by a servant maid, and charged with being a follower of Jesus. In a panic, Peter hastily denied any connection with Jesus, and at that moment his master was led across the courtyard. With anguished heart Peter rushed out "and wept bitterly." Judas, also touched by remorse, made a fruitless effort to return the money he had received.

BEFORE PONTIUS PILATE

In the morning, Jesus was taken before the Procurator. Pontius Pilate had already been informed that Jesus claimed to be a king, for he at once asked, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" Again Jesus made no effort to defend himself, realizing that Pilate could not grasp what he meant by true kingship. According to the Gospels, Pilate saw no harm in Jesus and wished to release him, even suggesting that Jesus be the prisoner who was annually released by

the government at the time of the Passover. But the Jewish leaders were determined to have Jesus condemned, so they stirred up the people to demand the release of Barabbas, a political revolutionist, and to shout for the crucifixion of Jesus. Pilate, in the midst of the clamor, wishing to hold the favor of the leaders, or perhaps afraid that a disturbance might arise because of Jesus, ordered the death of Jesus by crucifixion.

UNJUST PUNISHMENT

Jesus was then scourged by the Roman soldiers who further heaped insults upon him. A heavy cross was next placed upon his shoulders, and with two other prisoners he was led outside the city wall to the hill of Golgotha for execution. On the way, one Simon of Cyrene was pressed into service to carry the cross of Jesus part of the distance as Jesus staggered under his heavy burden. At the cross, Jesus was offered a narcotic to dull the sense of pain, but this he refused, desiring to see clearly to the end what was before him. On Golgotha, beside two thieves, he was crucified.

Seven beautiful sayings have been preserved in our four gospels as spoken by Jesus in his last hours. Evidently his mind centered on the 22nd Psalm, and in the first verse, and the last nine verses, his thoughts during those terrible moments can be traced. He passed from the psalmist's cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," to the great

affirmation of faith in the last verses of the psalm, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord . . . For the kingdom is the Lord's." The women who were in the throng that surrounded the cross reported that Jesus' last words were, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Joseph of Arimathaea requested permission of Pilate to remove the body of Jesus from the cross. This was granted and Joseph placed the body of his friend in his own tomb.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. What makes the betrayal by Judas seem so terrible? Read Mark 14: 43-50.

2. What answer did Jesus make to those who would defend him by force? Read Matthew 26: 51, 52.

3. Why was Peter, in later years, willing to tell the story of his denial of Jesus? (Mark received much of his information as to events from Peter for whom he acted as interpreter.) Read Mark 14: 66-72.

4. According to the Gospels, did Jesus publicly claim to be the Messiah? Read Mark 14: 55-65.

5. Notice how Jesus refused to defend himself. Mark 15: 2-5; Luke 22: 66-71; Luke 23: 2-5.

6. What really brought about the death of Jesus? Could this have been prevented? Did his death stop the work of Jesus?

7. People use many terms in referring to Jesus.

Which of these terms commonly used do you like best:

Son of God	Messiah
Christ	Master
Elder Brother	Lord
Son of Man	Savior

8. Why is the crucifixion of Jesus called both "the greatest tragedy in history," and "the greatest triumph in history"?

9. What is meant by vicarious suffering? How does the suffering of good people help to prevent or overcome evil in the world?

10. Have other good men and women died for their faith? Who?

11. What was the effect of the courage of Jesus upon a stranger? Read Mark 15: 39. See footnote in the Revised Version.

12. Why is the cross the symbol of Christianity?

SECTION XVIII

TRIUMPHANT FAITH

THREE DAYS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

The Gospels suggest that after the death of Jesus his disciples passed through great despair. Some of them probably returned to Galilee at once, convinced that all their hopes were destroyed by the tragic death of Jesus. Others remained in Jerusalem broken-hearted and discouraged.

Most of the disciples had anticipated that Jesus was to show himself to be the Davidic conqueror in Jerusalem. Now these hopes were destroyed. But, beginning on the third day after the crucifixion, a tremendous transformation came over the disciples. Their despair changed to joy. Suddenly they were convinced that Jesus lived, and that his work would continue. He was in heaven and would soon return to inaugurate the new kingdom. Meanwhile he wanted them to spread his teachings, to carry on his program, and to convince others of the truths he had taught.

HOW DID THE CHANGE TAKE PLACE?

The Sadducees denied any resurrection from the dead, and thought that the influence of an individual after his death could be continued only through his family. The Pharisees believed that at death the soul of the individual went to Sheol, a great cavern under the earth, to remain until the future Judgment Day when it would again occupy a material body. Sheol was partly a place of punishment for sins committed on earth, and partly a place where the souls wandered about as shades without experiencing any pleasures. Early Christians thought, as did the Pharisees, that at a future Judgment Day the human soul would appear for blessing or condemnation, and at the same time would receive a new body. Some thought this new body would be a material one like the old; others, like St. Paul, thought that the soul after death at once took on a new spiritual body.

We shall never know exactly what took place during the few days after the death of Jesus, but we do know that a great transformation occurred in the minds of the disciples, and on this change rests the growth and development of the Christian Church. The sad, discouraged, perplexed followers of Jesus, almost overnight, became joyous, courageous men who went out into the world to declare a new teaching at the peril of their lives.

The explanation given by St. Paul seems to be the

most satisfactory one of the resurrection of Jesus. It is also our oldest written account of that event. He writes that the resurrection of Jesus was a spiritual occurrence, that is, that the appearance of Jesus was an inward one within the minds of his disciples. St. Paul makes no distinction between his own experience on the road to Damascus and the appearance of Jesus to Peter and the Twelve in Jerusalem. A generation later, when the four Gospels were written, many legends were in circulation concerning the resurrection of Jesus, some of which were incorporated in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In several of these legends, it is suggested that Jesus appeared in a physical body, and after some weeks ascended into heaven in sight of his followers.

None of the later additions add much to our knowledge of the resurrection of Jesus, and serve only to confuse the accounts. What is important, and unchanged, is the faith of his immediate followers, and the great transformation that this faith made in their lives. Until the crucifixion, the disciples of Jesus hoped he would be the conquering Messiah who would rescue his people from the power of the Romans. This hope ended on Calvary. But, following the resurrection experiences, his disciples interpreted Jesus' life and teachings in a new pattern. They now thought of him as having won Messiahship by his perfect obedience to the will of God and through suffering. He was the Son of Man, now at the right hand of His Father in heaven, and

in the future he would return to earth to complete the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

For some time followers of Jesus looked for him to return in their lifetime to preside at the Judgment Day and inaugurate the final rule of God. Meanwhile, among Greek Christians other ideas developed. The Greeks thought that the soul lived on after death apart from the body. Thus these Greek-thinking Christians felt that the spirit of Jesus was always at work with them, and that no future appearance in a material body was to be expected. St. Paul has both ideas in his letters because he represents a mixing of Hebrew and Greek background. He expected Jesus to reappear with the clouds of angels, as he wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18; but he also said repeatedly that he himself is "in union with Christ," and that Christ now lives in him (Galatians 2: 20). The author of the Fourth Gospel, writing in the early part of the second century, from the Greek center of Ephesus, had the same conception of the continuing presence of Jesus. "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. . . . At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you. . . . He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14: 18, 20, 21.) With the passing of the centuries, all but a few Christian sects have given up the thought of a return of Jesus

in physical form. The thought of Paul and John, that the spirit of Jesus dwells with men, has predominated.

READINGS, PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

1. Read the earliest account of the resurrection experiences, found in 1 Corinthians 15: 4-8; also read Acts 9: 1-9. Note that Paul thought that Jesus appeared to Peter and the disciples in exactly the same manner in which Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus.

2. Read the 16th chapter of Mark.

3. In the following passages, which suggest a physical appearance, and which a spiritual? Luke 24: 30, 31; Luke 24: 36-43; Matthew 28: 9, 10; John 20: 19, 26.

4. Did Mark think of the resurrection experiences as taking place in Jerusalem or Galilee? Mark 16: 7.

5. Examine several pictures in which the artists endeavor to portray the appearance of Jesus to his disciples. Does the artist suggest a physical or spiritual experience? (Wilde or Perry Pictures include the work of several artists.)

6. The story told by Luke in 24: 13-35 shows the difficulty the disciples had in thinking a crucified person could be the Messiah.

7. Why was the faith of the early Christians that Jesus continued to live such a driving force in their future teaching?

8. What is meant in Mark 16: 20?

9. What was the "gospel" the disciples were told to preach in Mark 16: 16?

10. What caused the change in the two commands found in Matthew 10: 5, 6 and Mark 16: 15?

11. What did the disciples mean when they said they felt that the spirit of Jesus went with them in their work of preaching and teaching?

12. Read the 14th chapter of John. In how many verses can you find the suggestion that the spirit of Jesus lives on in the lives of his followers?

13. How do men come to "know" Jesus today?

14. Does the influence of Jesus weaken with the passing centuries?

PART III

WHAT JESUS SAID



SECTION XIX

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT GOD

WHAT A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GIRL THOUGHT

Elsbeth McCollum of the Baltimore Friends School wrote as follows about Jesus' idea of God:

"The kind of a life people live depends on what they think about God. If they think there is no God they will not live a good life. If they think of Him only as a ruler they will fear God. If they think of Him as a father, as Jesus taught, they will try to do as He would like, and seek to please Him. It is necessary to have the right idea of God, because the nation or group which has the highest conception of God will have also the highest system of ethics, the finest standards, and, as a natural result, the best form of civilization.

"The Greeks invested their Gods with super-human powers, but also with all the human faults and weaknesses; savages believe in a hostile, cruel God, and their only relation with this King of Darkness and Fear is one of trying blindly to propitiate him. In the Old Testament, Isaiah said that God is so great, exalted and sublime, that our mortal minds

can scarcely comprehend Him. The world, the nations are all as insignificant as dust beside Him, and yet his loving-kindness is infinite; He loves us as a father loves his children, and guards us as a shepherd guards his sheep. Amos had no such gentle conception of the Lord. He believed Jehovah was a God to be feared.

"Jesus said that God was the Father of each one of us personally, not the Father of one Chosen Race."

Do you agree that it does make a great deal of difference what we think about God? What difference might it make in the lives of individuals if they did not believe in any God? Could life be happier if one felt there was a God like the Heavenly Father described by Jesus?

WHAT THE JEWS THOUGHT ABOUT GOD

The first command of the Jewish religion was, "Hear ye, O Israel, the Lord our God is one, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut. 6: 5.) They believed that God was the only true God who created the world and all that was in it. Through the centuries the prophets had interpreted the character of God, and His will for men. They had taught such great principles as these: God is perfect goodness and holiness; God is absolutely just; God is merciful; God is worthy of worship and love; God is King of the universe; God is the Father of His people.

The greatness of the Jewish conception of God can be better appreciated by reading and thinking over the meaning of some of the beautiful sayings about God found in the Old Testament. Read these aloud slowly. What do you think each saying means?

I, Jehovah, am one God, and besides me there is none else. Isaiah 45: 5.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . and God said, Let there be light: and there was light. Genesis 1: 1, 3.

Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, Jehovah is his name. Amos 5: 8.

For lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the winds, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name. Amos 4: 13.

Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream (saith Jehovah). Amos 5: 24.

He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God. Micah 6: 8.

I love thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer. Psalm 18: 1, 2.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Psalm 23: 1.

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
Whom shall I fear? Psalm 27: 1.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46: 1.

JEWISH THOUGHT OF GOD AS FATHER

The highest conception we have of God is that He is like a Father. This thought was also expressed by Old Testament prophets and teachers. Read aloud the following verses slowly. What effect should such a thought of God have upon a nation?

Ye are the sons of the living God. Hosea 1: 10.

But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter. Isaiah 64: 8.

Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? Malachi 2: 10.

JESUS' THOUGHT OF GOD

Jesus did not use abstract terms about God such as "first cause" or "evolutionary process." He accepted the general idea of God as developed by his people, and then built his own life on this conviction. Like the prophets of Israel, Jesus thought of God as exalted and great, as a mighty King and Judge. He taught no easy familiarity with God. And principally Jesus thought of God as Father. He was the righteous Judge who demanded absolute obedience of His children; but He also was the

tender Father who longed to give good things to His children, and to protect them from harm. He was the Good Shepherd.

Jesus saw all things under the direct control of God. The lilies were given their garments by God, the birds were fed and protected by Him. God worked through the yeast, He caused the sun to rise and the rain to fall. God was not far off in a distant heaven, controlling the earth through angelic messengers, as some thought in the first century, but was in the midst of His world, and He had direct concern for all things.

Jesus spoke of God as "My Father," "Our Father," and "Your Father." He saw Him not as the Father of one race or as the Father of a selected nation, like the Hebrew, but as the Father of all men.

WHAT DIFFERENCE IT MAKES TO US

Jesus lived in a joyous relationship with God. He felt close to Him at all times, and in moments of temptation or difficulty Jesus turned to his Heavenly Father in prayer to find out what path he was to pursue. Jesus trusted absolutely in the will of God, and kept faith with his trust to the very end.

Can we talk with God? How?

To what extent does God guide us in our daily lives?

Does he tell us what is right and what is wrong? How?

Do we have moments of insight when we understand more clearly what God wants us to do?

How does the example of Jesus help us better to understand the character of God?

How does the example of Jesus show us what God may want of our lives?

SECTION XX

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT MAN

WHAT JESUS THOUGHT ABOUT MAN

Jesus thought as other men of his time along many lines, and he used current ideas to explain many things. Jesus explained why men do wrong in two different ways. In the Book of Genesis is found the story of Adam, the ancestor of the race, who disobeyed God and thus brought sin into the world. The Jews believed in the solidarity of the race, and thus the sin of an ancestor meant a tendency to sin on the part of his descendants. In addition, men of the time thought that there was a host of evil demons who constantly urged men to do wrong, and who led them into evil ways. Jesus used both of these contemporary ideas as explanations of why men do wrong. But Jesus felt that individual men knew what was right and what was wrong, and that men could, if they wished, choose the right. Jesus urged his disciples, at all cost, to choose the right and stifle wrong impulses. Speaking symbolically, he said that it was better to tear out an eye if it led one into

evil, or cut off an arm, if it caused a man to do that which was wrong.

Do intelligent men believe today that there are evil spirits in the world who tempt individuals to do wrong?

What real truth is hidden within the story of Adam's sin? Do we inherit unsocial tendencies from our primitive ancestors?

Where does fear come from? The desire to run away in face of danger? Were these fears ever a safeguard?

Where does the desire to acquire things come from? Was the desire to accumulate things ever the margin between life and starvation?

INFINITE WORTH

Jesus believed that men could live as children of the Heavenly Father, and that, therefore, men were the most precious things in the entire world. Even if a man had made a bitter mistake, Jesus believed he still had the possibility within of realizing his mistake, correcting it, and living a transformed life. The possibilities of man were limitless in the eyes of Jesus; man was good, and he was capable of goodness.

Thus Jesus held that anything which destroyed the possible good in man, anything which degraded man, anything which injured man, or made it impossible for man to realize the finest things he was capable of realizing was wrong.

If we agree with Jesus in his estimate of the worth of man, what must our attitude be towards such social conditions as these:

The waging of present-day international wars.

A prison system which punishes men without reforming them.

The use of automobiles in such a way that as many individuals are killed by them in the United States every sixty days as were killed in the battle of Gettysburg.

The situation which exists in many southern states where colored children receive only a few months' schooling, in inadequate buildings, under poorly paid teachers.

The situation which exists in many rural, and in some crowded city sections, where large numbers of men, women and children cannot secure proper medical attention.

The situation which exists in several parts of our country where Japanese, Mexicans, Indians, and Negroes are excluded from all skilled work, and are not allowed to belong to labor unions, or enter the ranks of the skilled crafts and better-paid positions.

THE FORGIVENESS OF GOD

Jesus realized that men often yield to lower impulses and do what is wrong. But Jesus said that a man who was truly sorry for his mistakes, and earnestly set himself against repeating what he had done, would be forgiven by his Heavenly Father.

This truth Jesus set forth most clearly in a series of parables which explain the attitude God has towards those who do wrong.

Read the three parables of the seeking, loving, forgiving Father, as found in Luke.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep, Luke 15: 1-7.

Why did the sinners come to hear Jesus?

Why is the term shepherd such a good one to describe God?

Why was the shepherd not satisfied with having ninety-nine of his sheep?

What might the phrase to "go after that which is lost" mean?

How did the shepherd feel when he had found and returned the lost sheep?

The Parable of the Lost Coin, Luke 15: 8-10.

Why was the coin, being part of the woman's dowry, so precious in her eyes?

What value does the parable suggest an individual might have in the eyes of God?

The Parable of the Lost Son, Luke 15: 11-24, 25-32.

What had the young son done?

Why did the father permit him to go into the far country?

What did the young man discover?

What does the parable mean where it reads, "but when he came to himself"?

How was the young son planning to express his sorrow and repentance?

Did his father scorn him, or upbraid him?

Why was the elder son angry?

What had the elder son "enjoyed"?

In the nation, whom might the elder son represent?

Why was the viewpoint of the elder son not as noble as that of the father?

THE RIGHT CONDUCT DEMANDED OF MAN TOWARD GOD

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," said Jesus. This righteousness, or right living, consisted mainly of two attitudes based on the motives within men.

No man could put first the Kingdom of God who did not love God and wish to live as He desired. If a man trusted God he would not be afraid. This is what Jesus meant on the occasion of a great storm on the Sea of Galilee when he rebuked his disciples and said, "Why are ye fearful? have ye not yet faith?" (Mark 4: 40). Jesus taught that men are not to worry even about the necessities of life, but are to trust God to care for them and to provide what they need.

How did Jesus demonstrate his complete trust in God?

Did the death of Jesus contradict his trusting faith?

Read Matthew 6: 26-34. What does it mean? In what sense do you think it is true?

Does God miraculously provide for us, or does he seem to make use of human agencies?

Many people think the teachings of Jesus on this point are not "practical." What do you think? Discuss pro and con.

THE RIGHT CONDUCT DEMANDED OF MAN TOWARD MAN

Righteousness, or right living, also involved a certain attitude toward one's fellow-men. This sprang from the idea that men being children of God must thus be brothers to one another.

As God acted toward men, so men must act toward one another, Jesus taught. Peter once was impatient with one of the other disciples and asked Jesus if it was sufficient to forgive a man seven times; but Jesus said there could be no limit to forgiveness, one must forgive another even seventy times seven. On one occasion his disciples were very angry with a village of Samaritans and asked Jesus if they ought not to desire the village be destroyed; but Jesus said that his followers went about saving life not destroying it. The disciples said that a conquering king was the ideal figure, but to Jesus the greatest man was one who served. Right living involved forgiveness, mercy, goodwill and brotherhood.

WHOLE-HEARTEDNESS

Putting right living first, conducting oneself as a brother to all men has been expressed by William Byron Forbush in these words: "Let us throw our whole soul into this business of living as God's children: let us not permit minor things to obscure our vision of life's supreme goal. 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' 'He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of Heaven.' 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God'—not only—'with all thy heart'—but also—'with all thy strength.' "

How did the following men demonstrate or fail to show the qualities of forgiveness, mercy, goodwill, brotherhood, whole-heartedness: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther, William the Conqueror, St. Francis, Ramsay MacDonald, Queen Elizabeth, Andrew Jackson?

SECTION XXI

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE TEACHING OF THE KINGDOM

Jesus began his ministry with the words, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the Gospel." He urged men to prepare for the coming of the kingdom of God by turning their backs on their old ways of living, and by striving to act in conformity with the right which God shows them. Jesus explained what citizenship in the kingdom means, and in his own life lived as a citizen here and now.

It is natural that Jesus should express his teachings concerning the kingdom of God in terms which were being used in Palestine in his own day. Often, however, we cannot tell whether the statements made in our Gospels are really the words of Jesus, or whether they are the thoughts of the disciples. Perhaps we must contrast the ideas of Jesus, with those of his disciples, and also with our ideas today, and try to find the eternal truth which underlies

different ways of expressing the hope of a kingdom of God.

The Jewish people believed that God was their creator and ruler, and thus, in one sense, He was the King of Israel. They did not feel that God actually ruled the nation completely because they were very conscious of the evil within their own lives, and of the evil times in which the nation existed during so many centuries. So they felt God's real rule was still in the future. Unlike modern people, the Jews felt the world was getting worse rather than better; to them the golden age was in the past. They felt that when evil conditions had reached a certain point, God would intervene and recreate His world. When this took place the Jewish nation, as God's Chosen People, would be transformed outwardly and inwardly, and all the good people would henceforth enjoy peace and prosperity.

Many, like John the Baptist, thought this great change was close at hand. John also said that before the change came God would send His agent to crush the evil conquerors of Israel and rule for a long peaceful reign in Palestine. Following this peaceful age would come the final Judgment Day.

We are not absolutely sure what Jesus thought concerning the manner in which the kingdom would come, and men differ very much in their interpretation of his ideas on the subject. The Gospel writers, who did their work a generation later, give us this picture: Jesus felt that he was the Messiah of God,

but a "Suffering Messiah," not an avenging heavenly being. He won his Messiahship by perfect obedience to the will of God. Jesus thought his death would hasten the coming of the kingdom, and that shortly he would return from heaven as the Messiah and rule till the Judgment Day. "There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9: 1) "Again the high priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14: 62.) This is what Peter thought Jesus meant, and he hoped to live to see his master return from the heavens with the angelic hosts to complete his work. St. Paul expressed this idea also, though he added the thought that the spirit of Jesus was already at work on earth, through union with the disciples, directing them toward citizenship in the kingdom.

In the oldest sources of our gospels there is another idea expressed. This is that Jesus came as a great prophet without making any claim to be the Messiah, and that he thought God Himself would intervene some day to rebuild His world without the aid of any special agent. Until that day should come, Jesus taught his followers to live in conformity to the will of God, so that they could receive citizenship in the kingdom when it came.

No doubt we shall never know for sure which view is correct, but these facts were certainly in the mind of Jesus:

God is creator and ruler, now and in the future.

As time passes, the world will more fully correspond to the goodness God desires.

Men can prepare by right living to be citizens of the kingdom of God.

Men can hasten the coming of the kingdom by prayer, right conduct, and by sacrifice.

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

Read the Parable of the Seed, in Mark 4: 26-29.

This may mean either that the kingdom gradually evolves and grows like a plant, or that the kingdom's growth is in the hands of God alone. Which is the most helpful idea to us? Which idea was probably held by men in the first century?

Read the Parable of the Mustard Seed, in Mark 4: 30-32.

This may mean that the kingdom of God spreads rapidly from a small beginning to the largest dimensions; or that the coming of the kingdom is still in the future, and its realization entirely in the hands of God. How do such ideas as democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of press spread in our day? How are they suppressed?

Read the Parable of the Leaven, in Luke 13: 20, 21.

As in the two previous parables this means either

that the kingdom gradually and steadily grows larger and larger, or that God works in a mysterious manner unknown to men. Have liberty and democracy steadily spread through the centuries without halting? When and by whom were great advances made or declines experienced?

If Jesus had spoken in such modern terms as evolution, electrons, fourth dimensions, could those men of his time have understood him?

What is the real truth expressed in the parables of the kingdom?

EARNESTNESS ABOUT THE KINGDOM

In parables Jesus pointed out the extent to which our lives should be guided by a desire to be worthy of the kingdom of God.

Read the Parable of the Goodly Pearl. Matthew 13: 45, 46.

The merchant, skilled in appraising beautiful things, finds the "one pearl of great price" and sells all he has in order to purchase it. What might membership in the kingdom of Heaven cost a man? What did it cost St. Francis? Jane Addams?

Read the Parable of the Hidden Treasure. Matthew 13: 44.

The hidden treasure was found unexpectedly, by accident. How did the finder come to possess it? Do we find the "hidden treasure" by reading tales of Captain Kidd and searching for buried chests?

Did Matthew Levi find the treasure by searching for it? How was the way opened to him?

Read the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, Matthew 25: 1-13.

Does membership in a select group, or in a certain nation, entitle one to membership in the kingdom?

Does a wish to enter the kingdom secure citizenship?

Name some forces at work in our world which tend to build a better social order or kingdom of God.

Name some forces at work in our world which tend to destroy the highest civilization.

How can young people prepare themselves for membership in the kingdom?

Name certain character qualities which are most needed by the individual for kingdom citizenship.

SECTION XXII

THE IDEAL LIFE

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus did not formulate a set of rules for the guidance of his followers. He stated certain basic principles upon which they should build their lives, and by which they should judge specific actions. It is harder to apply basic principles than to follow a set of rules, but no rules could have been given for one century which would meet the changing requirements of later centuries. Jesus saw that the mechanical keeping of rules on the part of many pious people in his own time did not result in the free, abundant life that he desired. The laws of Moses were kept, but the spirit of the Mosaic legislation was often disregarded. The followers of Jesus, in each generation, must use their keenest judgment and best thought in applying daily the great principles of right living which Jesus gave. The application of these principles will vary with changing social conditions, new discoveries, and greater insight.

The most complete picture we have of right conduct, or the Ideal Life, as portrayed by Jesus, is to

be found in the Sermon on the Mount, reported in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew, and in Luke 6: 20-49.

It is not likely that the Sermon on the Mount, as found in its longest form in Matthew, was given by Jesus on a single occasion. No one present took down the words of Jesus in shorthand. His disciples, who heard him on many occasions, transmitted orally what he said to those who listened to them. Often, no doubt, Jesus repeated the same general message on many occasions, and it is very likely that in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew we have certain sections incorporated which were not all given on the same occasion. As it is, these three chapters represent the largest single block of teachings of Jesus we have in the four Gospels. The contents of these chapters are taken from the oldest source of our present Gospels, sometimes called the "Logia of Matthew," and go back to the earliest oral teachings of those who themselves heard Jesus.

THE PLAN OF THE SERMON

The theme of these three chapters is the Ideal Life. Here is given a picture of what right living is, how it is achieved, and what it accomplishes. In addition, this description of the Ideal Life is compared with the older blueprint of right living given to the Hebrew people by Moses. The chapters end with an appeal to the disciples to live out the ideal in their own lives.

The sermon was given early in the ministry of Jesus, during that period which might be called the "Indian Summer" of his work, when hostile voices had not yet been raised against him. It was delivered somewhere on the slopes of a hill overlooking the Sea of Galilee, to his disciples and to the multitudes who had come from Capernaum and neighboring cities to hear him.

THE BEATITUDES

The characteristics of one who lives the Ideal Life are pointed out in the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5: 3-12. Read these over in the King James Version, or the American Revised, and compare the wording, if possible, with that given in the translations of Edgar J. Goodspeed (*The Bible: An American Translation*), or James Moffatt (*A New Translation*).

Blessed or "happy" was a term often used in the Old Testament to suggest material or spiritual prosperity. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor," is found in Psalm 41: 1, and "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee," is found in Psalm 84: 5.

How is the term used in the 1st Psalm? In Psalm 118: 26?

Jesus used the term to suggest deep spiritual satisfaction or happiness.

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Here the poor does not refer to those who are destitute of this world's goods, nor does it mean those who are poor in spiritual qualities, that is, sinners. Dr. Goodspeed has translated the real meaning of the first beatitude in these words, "Blessed are those who feel their spiritual need, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them!" Jesus evidently meant that those who realized their dependence upon God, those who were teachable, and those who looked beyond themselves for help would be happy.

How does this beatitude fit the attitude of the scientist?

Is this what Jesus meant when he said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"?

How does St. Paul's statement in Romans 12: 3 correspond with the first beatitude, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"?

Can you name several individuals who exemplify this beatitude in our own time?

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Mourn does not mean here that just anyone who happens to be sorry for something will be satisfied. It depends upon the attitude of the mourner and for what he is sorry. Men may lose their possessions in a depression, but just because they are sorry there is no guarantee that their wealth will be returned to them.

Jesus refers here to several things. First, no doubt, to those who are sad because of the death of some friend or member of the family. He expected life after death and lived his own life in this expectation. If death was a mere turn on the road to life eternal, then one should not be oversorrowful when others passed the turn, nor be frightened when the turning place came for them. If God is the Father, and men are His children, they can trust Him to care for them in the future as in the present.

Ozora Davis, a great teacher, wrote when his own death was not far away, "Of course I do not want to go; this is a mighty interesting world, and I am having a mighty good time in it. But I am no more afraid of death than I am of walking into the next room."

Why is this the attitude of a strong Christian man?

How does this appeal to you in contrast to the

attitude of an ancient Greek who wrote to her friend in consolation, "Irene to Taonnophris and Philo, good cheer! I was as much grieved and wept over the blessed one, as I wept for Didymas, and everything that was fitting I did and all who were with me. . . . But truly there is nothing any one can do in the face of such things"?

To mourn also means to grieve over our mistakes and shortcomings. Jesus declared that those who were truly sorry for mistakes they had made, and earnestly desired to avoid similar wrong acts in the future, would be forgiven by God, and given the strength to live better.

In Section II of Part II we have already studied the Parable of the Prodigal Son as an example of God's forgiveness. Now apply its lesson nearer home.

Did Jesus mean in this beatitude that we are always to keep grieving over our past mistakes?

When can God forgive us for wrong-doing?

How do we know if He has forgiven us?

Even if we feel forgiven and able to make a new start, are the consequences of our mistakes also wiped out?

If a boy or girl has cheated in an examination, what can they do to receive forgiveness?

If a man has become intemperate, then resolves to gain control of himself and remake his life, what must he do?

As soon as he "comes to himself" and tries to start

anew, are the bodily results of his intemperance removed?

To mourn also means to be sorry for the evil that exists in the world in which we live. We know that many things go on which do not make our world a human brotherhood. There are failures in our economic arrangements, some men have too much and some men do not have enough; there are hundreds of thousands of criminals in our country; there are vast sums gambled away each year; and there are wars which destroy untold property and take millions of lives.

In the issue of the Reader's Digest for November, 1938, there was an interesting foreshortening of the time scale which stated that, in relation to the development of the earth, it was only one year ago that man began to use sticks and stones for tools, but yesterday that he invented the alphabet, that the steam engine came into being a few hours ago, that the automobile was invented but fifteen minutes ago, and man began to fly only one minute ago. In view of the length of civilization in point of time, man has only begun to advance. Should we be impatient if he has not solved all of his problems?

Is it easier to discover and apply the laws of physical matter, or the laws of social relationships? In which realm do we have greatest difficulty?

Where are we most successful in human relationships: the family, club group, city life, national life, international life? Name several reasons for this.

Do you think an individual would be "comforted" most if he:

decided to forget all the troubles in the world?

decided to do as little in public affairs as possible?

decided to be as well informed as he could be on human, national, and international affairs?

decided to work on some committee, in an institution, for some legislative change which would make conditions better?

SECTION XXIII

FURTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IDEAL LIFE

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Meekness does not mean a bashful, sleek individual with an inferiority complex. Rather it means a person of poise and self-control, the opposite of arrogance. Jesus was "meek" when he washed the feet of his disciples in the Upper Room. True meekness is suggested by his words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matthew 11: 29.)

Are gentleness, patience, and a forgiving spirit the marks of a strong or a weak man?

Europeans sometimes say that the American business man is anything but meek. What do they mean? Discuss the fairness of the charge pro and con.

Psalm 37: 11 says, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." How does this agree with the third beatitude? What do they both mean? Do you agree?

How did Jesus show meekness toward little children?

How did Jesus show meekness toward his disciples?

How did Jesus show meekness toward the traders in the temple?

What do we mean by "righteous indignation"?

When a "meek" person takes strong action, why is this action so impressive?

What type of individual is best to work with on a committee, the one who is absolutely sure of himself, or the one who is "meek"?

Why do people open doors of opportunity for those who are "meek"?

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Both hunger and thirst were very real things in Palestine in the days of Jesus. Droughts were not infrequent, there were often plagues of locusts which swept away every green thing, and the fields were so small that few farmers had any leeway for a bad year. In all shepherd lands, such as the Judean hill country, water enough for the flocks was always a problem. Thus Jesus' hearers knew what was meant when he spoke of hunger and thirst. But in this beatitude Jesus is not speaking of the physical side of life. He is speaking of the longing men should have

for living uprightly, as a requirement for citizenship in God's kingdom.

Some Pharisees said that they were righteous. Is this the attitude Jesus desired?

Why is it that the longing for, but not the possession of, uprightness, is the thing commended?

Is it true that the further a man progresses the more he wants to grow? Does a man grow less dissatisfied with himself as he grows in wisdom and experience?

How is this beatitude related to the Parable of the Great Pearl, or the Parable of the Hidden Treasure found in Matthew 13: 44-46?

What did Jesus mean when he said that those who sincerely tried to be upright should be "filled"?

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

In early days the Hebrews thought of God as the mighty creator, Lord of all, terrible in punishment and judgment. See Exodus 20: 5 and Exodus 26: 14-25.

Centuries before Jesus, Hosea softened this thought and declared that God was a God of mercy and love. "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim . . . I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." (Hosea 11: 9, 14: 4.) Jesus put all this in the term Father.

In this beatitude, Jesus says that since God is merciful to man, He requires each man to be merciful toward his fellow-men. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." (Luke 6: 36.)

What did Jesus mean in the incident told in Matthew 9: 10-13?

Read the parable found in Matthew 18: 23-35. How is this parable related to the fifth beatitude?

Which of these words suggests the merciful: intolerant, bigoted, sympathetic, compassionate, tyrannical, hard, kindly, exacting, forgiving?

What do we mean by merciful judgment?

How is mercy carried into daily life? Read Matthew 25: 31-46 for a program. Translate these suggestions into everyday terms.

How does the statement in Micah 6: 6-8 sum up the third, fourth and fifth beatitudes?

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Although the Jewish people had a superior ethical life, there were cases of impurity among them. This was especially true during the first centuries in high places, such as in the palace of Herod, where pagan influences were at work. Jesus demanded of his followers an honest, clean, pure life. He felt that impurity erected a barrier between a man and God.

Why was there a "crusade" against certain mo-

tion pictures a few years ago? Was this undertaken on the part of fanatics?

Why do parents wish to chose the motion pictures their children attend? Is this a reasonable attitude?

Why is it said that "impurity takes the shine off of life."

Why did the knights of the Middle Ages take a vow of purity?

A business man refused to hire a young man whose character was not above reproach. Some one asked him to reconsider his refusal, and defended the young man. The older man shrugged his shoulder and replied, "I don't like burnt toast." What did he mean?

There is another meaning, however, to this beatitude, one suggested by the 24th Psalm where it reads, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

Here Jesus was referring to purity or singleness of motives. He was declaring that a man must be single-minded, not two-faced.

What do we mean when we say some men, "blow hot today, and cold tomorrow"?

Why is a traitor detested so much?

Read the test of Gideon in Judges 7: 1-8. Why was Gideon so particular? Did he weaken or strengthen his forces by his choice?

How can a man who is pure in heart "see God" in the course of events?

How can such a man better recognize God in his fellow-men than an evil-minded man?

SECTION XXIV

CONCLUDING BEATITUDES

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

The master-blessing in the Bible is peace. It is the climax of the most used Hebrew benediction. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace." (Numbers 6: 24-26.)

The Jewish people, who had lived in the midst of strife for centuries, longed for peace. Time after time their land had been invaded by the armies of other nations, and, in the days of Jesus, they were under the rule of an alien emperor. Their Messiah was to be the "Prince of Peace," and they dreamed of a time when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2: 4.)

Here is an incomplete time schedule of invasions

of Palestine by neighboring nations before the birth of Jesus:

28th century.	Sargon of Babylonia.
21st century.	Hammurabi of Babylonia.
16th century.	Thothmes I of Egypt.
15th century.	Thothmes III of Egypt.
12th century.	Rameses III of Egypt.
900-780	Wars between Israel and Judea.
8th century.	Repeated invasions of the As- syrians.
7th century.	Invasion of the Scythians.
7th century.	Invasions of Assyria, Baby- lonia, Egypt.
6th century.	Destruction of Jerusalem.
6th century.	Conquest by Persia.
4th century.	Conquest by Alexandria.
4th and 3rd cen- turies.	Wars in Palestine between Se- leucids of Syria and Ptolemy of Egypt.
2nd century.	Wars of the Maccabees.
1st century B.C.	Conquest of Rome; Wars of Herod.

From this chart one can see why the Hebrew people longed so for peace.

Study a map of the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. Is Palestine still a trade route? Why is there such unrest in Palestine today?

Do you side with the Jewish point of view, or the

Arab point of view? Discuss pro and con. Suggest a workable solution.

Why is Palestine spoken of as "the Belgium of the East"?

Is war more of a menace to civilization in our time than in the days of Jesus?

Do the peoples of Germany and Italy want war? Give pro and con.

Do the peoples of France and England want war? Give pro and con.

Name several reasons why nations go to war today?

What do we mean by national "honor" and "national prestige"?

Why do national insults so easily lead to war?

How could an "insulted" nation keep from going to war?

What do we mean by the nations classed as "haves" and "have-nots"? Which is more apt to go to war?

How can Germany be right in insisting that she did not start the last World War?

What part do economic conditions play in causing wars?

Why is it true that nations more easily go to war in times of depression?

Do all men agree as to the best way of preventing war? If you think they do not, should that make you stop working for peace?

What are some of the ways suggested today to

prevent war? Do you think they are practical? Discuss pro and con.

How can a young person help his country promote peace?

Should a young person under twenty-one sign a pledge not to fight in a future war? Discuss pro and con.

In this beatitude, Jesus also meant by peace something other than a stop to national or international conflict. To live uprightly an individual must be at peace with himself, at peace with his fellow men, and at peace with God.

How does a man achieve a harmonious life?

Do any of these words suggest a possible answer: balance, singleness of purpose, mental conflict, a desire for revenge, a desire for physical fitness, education, selfishness, well-rounded preparation, lack of self-control, meddlesomeness, mischief-making, goodwill?

Why was Jesus at peace with himself?

Why should peacemakers be called "sons of God"?

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your

reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Jesus desired to bring peace into the life of the individual, between men, and between nations, but he knew that the spread of his message would mean persecution of those who carried his words abroad and who tried to live out his teachings. We might expect that those who live good lives, who devote themselves unselfishly to the welfare of others, would stand high in the regard of all men; but more often they meet with coldness, contempt, ridicule and violence. This was the experience of the prophets, of John the Baptist, and of Jesus. This was the experience of the early Christians, and of all reformers from their day to ours.

Think over again the reasons why Jesus was put to death. Why did the Pharisees desire his removal? Why did the Sadducees call for his execution? Why did the Romans act so swiftly against him?

Read the incident concerning St. Paul in Acts 16: 16-24. Why did the masters wish Paul put in prison?

Read Acts 19: 21-29. Why did the craftsmen of Ephesus wish to destroy Paul?

Why do owners of distilleries fight every effort to teach temperance?

Why is any one automobile manufacturer afraid to put a control on his car which will keep it within the state laws of 45 or 50 miles an hour?

Why did owners of munition plants send an agent

to a recent disarmament conference to sow dissension among the delegates?

How could President Woodrow Wilson say in a speech made in St. Louis, September 5, 1919: "Why, my fellow citizens, is there any man here or any woman, let me say, is there any child here, who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry? The real reason that the war that we have just finished took place was that Germany was afraid her commercial rivals were going to get the better of her, and the reason why some nations went into the war against Germany was that they thought Germany would get commercial advantage of them. . . . This war, in its inception, was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war."

Why did owners of cotton plantations in the South fight against emancipation of the slaves?

Name some reasons why George Fox was not popular with clergymen, businessmen, and politicians of his day?

Was John Woolman cordially received among wealthy Quaker families?

Do people like to be told they are not living uprightly?

Are customs of one period, which seem perfectly right at the time, labeled as wrong in later centuries? Can you name any?

What did Jesus say was the reward of those who did right in face of persecution? What did he mean?

SECTION XXV

THE IDEAL LIFE IN PRACTICE

TO PRESERVE AND TO LIGHT

Read Matthew 5: 13-16. Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world.

Salt was not rare in Palestine, but it was hard to get. It came from the neighborhood of the Dead Sea and it was a very important item among the exports of the land. Roman soldiers of the time received disks of salt in part-payment of their wages. These were called *salus*, from which has come our word salary.

In Bible times the word was used to suggest faithfulness and as a preservative. Jesus evidently stressed the later meaning of the word. To him the disciples were to go into the world and preserve it from evils, impurities and all that was bad. If they did not do this, and took over any of the evil of the world, then like salt mixed with dirt they would lose their power as a preservative.

The disciples, moreover, were not "to hide their light under a bushel." They were not to be boastful, or to claim any superiority, but in their character

and deeds they were to be a demonstration of the truth they held.

How did Christianity act as a preservative during the period of European history known as "The Dark Ages"?

On the American frontier how did the Christian church serve as a preservative?

Was there any period in the centuries of Christian history when the church "lost its savour"?

How does the individual Christian "lose his savour" today?

What do we mean when we say, "Christianity has spread mostly by contagion"?

How did the hermits of the early days of the church forget to "let their light shine"?

Read Matthew 6: 1-5. Enumerate the wrong ways mentioned in these verses of "letting your light shine."

What is a religious hypocrite?

How can one fulfil the command of Matthew 5: 14 without being a religious hypocrite?

THE NEW IDEAL AND THE OLD

To the Hebrews, the Old Testament was a precious heritage, and its commandments were considered to be the laws made by God for His people. Those who heard Jesus were very anxious to know how his teachings related to the teachings of the Prophets and wise men of the past. His answer is found in Matthew 5: 17-20.

We sometimes forget when we see a high office building, that there are many stories below ground, which are necessary to enable the builder to erect his structure high in the air. So it was necessary for the laws and teachings of centuries to underlie the work and teachings of Jesus. He built on the foundations already laid by his people. He did not destroy these teachings, he added to them.

What did Jesus mean when he said that he came to "fulfil" the law?

Was he satisfied with the manner in which the teachers of the law (the scribes) and its most faithful exponents (the Pharisees) carried out the provisions of the law?

What more must his disciples do that the scribes and Pharisees did not do?

Did Jesus mean that he and his followers must literally carry out the letter of the law? Read and note these incidents before answering: Matthew 9: 14-17, Matthew 9: 10-13, Matthew 12: 1-8, Matthew 12: 9-14.

Our laws are constantly being amended to meet changing conditions. Is this to destroy the Constitution? How would you like to drive an automobile under the state laws of 1905?

Two hundred years ago the Puritans and the Quakers objected to the use of musical instruments, the wearing of bright colors, feasting at Christmas time, and most recreation which took the form of games. Are the historic contributions of the Puritan

and the Quaker being thrown away when musical instruments are purchased, bright colors worn, and such games as baseball or tennis enjoyed?

What is the test a Christian should consider when he departs from earlier customs?

THE USE OF OATHS

Oaths were required in certain cases by the Hebrew law (Exodus 22: 10, 11). The habit of evading oaths had grown up in the days of Jesus, however, and men sought to escape the obligations they assumed by changing the wording of the oath and then claiming they were not bound to carry out their bargains. Men thus dealt dishonestly with their neighbors. Jesus swept away all such dishonest practices. He declared that oaths were unnecessary, and that a man was accountable to God for what he said. An oath should be unnecessary because a man's word ought to be sufficient in itself to prove his honesty.

What do we mean by the phrase, "A man's word is as good as his bond"?

At what insincerity did the early Friends strike when they began the use of "thee" instead of "you" in addressing an individual? Is such a practice necessary any longer?

The Friends were the first business men in England to put price tags on their goods, and sell them for the same amount to both rich and poor. Why do you suppose other merchants denounced the

Quakers for this new practice? What advance did it make possible in the business world?

What is the basis of credit in business?

Bonding companies issue bonds on treasurers, cashiers, and other officials handling the financial business of banks, corporations, schools, and other institutions. Before issuing a bond for any individual, the bonding company requires certain information concerning the individual whom the bond is to cover. Here are some of the questions such a company asks those whom it bonds. Why do you suppose these particular questions are considered important, and the answers of value in proving the integrity of the official's character?

a. How have you been employed during the past ten years? Your answer should cover each month of that time. (He must be able to prove that he has not been in prison, for instance, during even a short time.)

b. Have you ever been discharged from a position? If so, explain why.

c. Have you ever been behind in your accounts in your present position, or in any previous one? If so, explain why.

d. Have you ever failed in business?

e. Have you any debts? How much? When due? When did you incur this debt?

f. Have you ever speculated in stocks, grain, oil, real estate, played cards for money, or gambled in any way?

g. Have you ever had an application for a bond denied?

It is estimated that robberies in this country amount to \$350,000,000 a year. Of this amount one third is taken by trusted employees, not by burglars. What does this suggest as to the need of education in honesty?

What are some of the reasons for such large amounts being stolen each year in the United States? Suggest some ways by which it could be prevented?

Name some men in our history who have been conspicuous for their honesty and integrity?

Can you think of any stories about these men which illustrate their honesty? Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant.

SECTION XXVI

THE IDEAL LIFE IN RELATION TO OTHERS

THE LAWS OF BROTHERHOOD

The Old Testament law declared that if a man did wrong, he was to receive the same kind of treatment in return from the one whom he had wronged. "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." (Exodus 21: 23-25.) "Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother." (Deuteronomy 19: 19.) This, however, was the law from the primitive times of the nomad shepherds, and it was softened by the later law found in Leviticus 19: 18, "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Jesus stood for the law of Leviticus as against the laws of Exodus and Deuteronomy in this case. He charged his disciples to receive injuries without taking vengeance, not to become angry when they were wronged, not to hate because they were treated with hatred, and to forgive freely.

ANGER FORBIDDEN

Read Matthew 5: 21-26.

In verse 22, Raca means "good-for-nothing," fool means "godless."

What attitude is Jesus condemning in this verse?

To what does anger sometimes lead?

Does Jesus seem to consider the motive of a deed as one with the deed itself? Is motive the source of danger?

Why did Jesus say that a man with anger in his heart toward another man could not worship?

What did Booker T. Washington mean when he said, "I will not let any man degrade me, by making me hate him"?

During the terrible persecution of the Jews by the Nazi government in Germany, Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron wrote in *Common Ground* (pages 160-161), "We Jews must not be driven to hate—for hatred does something worse to him who hates than to him who is the object of hate. Hate introduces into the soul a poison which destroys it. We Jews shall not hate." What would you have said under similar provocation? What would be the Christian thing to say and do? What would be the best thing to do to create the most good over the longest period?

THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS AND UNSELFISH GIVING

Read Matthew 5: 38-42. Should criminals receive punishment equal to their crime (v. 38)?

How are criminals treated in the best institutions today?

Does the result warrant such treatment?

Should we be willing to suffer wrong, even to sacrifice possessions, to avoid trouble with others?

What does Dr. Clyde W. Votaw mean when he says, "Love knows no limits but those which love itself imposes"?

What limits does love impose?

Discuss (a) the rightness, (b) the practicability, of this statement, "Every relation to mankind, of hate or scorn or neglect, is full of vexation and torment. There is nothing to do with men but to love them; to contemplate their virtues with admiration, their faults with pity and forbearance, and their injuries with forgiveness. Task all the ingenuity of your mind to devise some other thing, but you never can find it. To hate your adversary will not help you; to kill him will not help you; nothing within the compass of the universe can help you, but to love him." (Quoted by Henry C. King, in *The Ethics of Jesus*, page 253.)

THE LAW OF UNIVERSAL LOVE

In the days of Jesus, nations regarded one another with contempt and scorn. The Romans hated the Jews and thought of them as an inferior people; and the Jews hated the Romans and thought them a godless, pagan people. Thus it was thought to be sufficient if a man was kind and just to members

of his own nation. Jesus swept the distinction between men away. To him, all men were brothers, children of the one Father. Goodwill must be shown to men of other races as well as one's own.

In one of the greatest of all Parables, Jesus declared that a man's neighbor was anyone in need. Read Luke 10: 25-37. Note that the central figure in this parable is a Samaritan, member of the race most hated by the Jews.

Read Matthew 5: 43-48.

What do we mean by anti-Semitism? How is it shown in Germany and in Poland? How is it shown in the United States?

How would you meet this particular problem?

H. G. Wells has written, "I am convinced myself that there is no more evil thing in this present world than race prejudice; none at all. It is the worst single thing in life now. It justifies and holds together more baseness, cruelty and abomination than any other sort of error in the world." Discuss this statement. Is it too strong? Give incidents on which you base your opinion.

Two thirds of mankind are colored. One third is white, one third brown, and one third black, roughly speaking. Yet white men control nine tenths of the land; one half of Asia, and twenty-nine thirtieths of Africa.

According to the teachings of Jesus, has God singled out one nation or race to rule all the others?

Why is there so much feeling against native-born Japanese citizens in California? Against Americans of Mexican descent in New Mexico and Texas?

Are there any areas where Negro citizens of the United States are denied the right to vote? How would you solve this particular problem?

Should Negro families be restricted to certain areas in our cities?

Should Negroes receive equal pay for equal work? Do they?

Should Negroes be admitted to professions?

In Russia, Slavs, Mongols and Tartars mingle in the same schools, and elsewhere without friction. Would you say the Russians are or are not more Christian in their interracial relations than people in the United States?

There have been over 5000 lynchings in the United States since 1882. Is this forbidden by the Constitution? What do you think of a jailor who gives up his prisoner to a lynching party? How would you attack this problem?

What important things have the following Negroes contributed to the world: Booker T. Washington, Countee Cullen, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Paul Robeson, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Frederick Douglass, Roland Hayes, George W. Carver? What did Eddie Tolan, Jesse Owens, and Ralph Metcalfe do which won them great acclaim?

THE GOLDEN RULE

Read Matthew 7: 1-12.

Jesus told his disciples that they could not hope to improve others until they had begun the work of reformation on themselves. Thus his ideal of life excluded such things as faultfinding, flaw-picking, and criticism of others. When judging others Jesus said his followers must remember their own limitations, weaknesses, and failures. We must be sympathetic with others, ready to overlook their faults, and eager to see their good qualities.

Early in the first century, Hillel, a great Jewish teacher, had commanded his disciples, "Do not to others what thou wouldst not have done to thyself," and "What thou hatest thyself, that do not thou to another: this is the whole law, all the rest is comment on it." As a summary of the ideal life, Jesus also expressed the meaning of the law in one sentence, which we call the Golden Rule, Matthew 7: 12.

How does this summarize the law and the prophets?

SECTION XXVII

THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN THE IDEAL LIFE

HOW JESUS PRAYED

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus showed men why they should pray, for what they should pray, and in what spirit they should pray.

Jesus found courage, strength, and peace through prayer. It is frequently mentioned that he spent long periods of retirement in prayer and meditation, and before each crisis of his life withdrew to find the solution of his problems in this manner. At his baptism he was praying when he felt called to a new task. When he needed to choose disciples to be closer to him than the multitude could be, he first spent the night in prayer before naming them. He did not set out for Jerusalem on the last trip until he had spent a long period in prayer, and during the crucial moments of the last night spent in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed. Thus it was natural that his disciples should wish to know the best way to pray. Luke writes that they asked for instructions, and that they were answered by the giving of the Lord's Prayer. (Luke 11:1-4.)

Jesus told his disciples that they must pray frequently, briefly, earnestly, and with conviction. He then gave them a brief prayer as an example which should include all the things it was necessary to ask for in prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Read Matthew 6: 5-15.

The prayer that Jesus gave his disciples is divided into two parts, as is the Great Commandment. The first half takes up the praise of God, and the request that His kingdom grow; and the second half refers to human needs.

The English word "hallow" means to treat as holy. Thus, Jesus taught, men are to approach God with the thought of His greatness, majesty, and goodness; remembering at the same time that He is "Our Father." Just as Jesus said we were to remember to "seek first the kingdom of God," so in his prayer we were to pray always for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

In the second half of the Lord's Prayer what does "daily bread" refer to? Does it include luxuries?

Should we ever pray for material things? For a few? Many?

Why is our forgiveness qualified by the manner in which we forgive others?

Should we pray to be delivered from responsibility?

Should a farmer pray for rain? Why or why not?

What kind of prayers does God evidently answer?

Mohammedans pray five times a day. Do you think this a valuable custom?

Discuss the ideas of prayer suggested in the following quotations:

"Our universe is organized and linked. Every event is caused. There is no such thing in this physical world as an uncaused event. If we met a person who told us that he had seen a train of cars drawn along with no couplings and held together by the mutual affection of the passengers in the different cars we should know that he was an escaped lunatic. Even the weather is no more capricious than the course of the planets in space. Every change of wind and the course of every flying cloud is determined by previous conditions. . . . There is no little demon, there is no tall, bright angel, who holds back the shower or who pushes the clouds before him. . . . What is true of the weather is true in every physical realm . . . forked lightning never consults our preferences, nor do cyclones travel exclusively where bad men live." Rufus M. Jones (*The Double Search*, pages 91, 92).

"Prayer can open the eyes to the beauty and wonder of the world in which we live. . . . It can furnish us with supplies of energy which will reinforce our limited powers. . . . It can keep us true to our best selves, by holding ever before our eyes the man or woman we were meant to be." William

Adams Brown (*The Life of Prayer in a World of Science*, pages 13-14).

"Petitionary prayer is the expression of a sound instinct so long as we regard it, not as a means of extorting something from a grudging Deity, but as a spontaneous expression to our Father of wants which we deeply feel, and which it would be hypocrisy to pretend that we do not. These things we submit to God, not because we distrust His goodness or desire to bend His will to ours, but because He is our friend. Similarly it would be unnatural not to submit to God the needs of others, and our hopes and fears on their behalf." Canon Burnett H. Streeter (*Reality*, page 293).

"We can and should pray for other people and for causes outside our own life provided our prayer concludes with the petition that we ourselves may gain the wisdom, the strength, and the quietness of mind which will enable us to meet the needs of those other people, those other causes. There is a significant difference between praying for our friends by asking God to help them, and praying for our friends by asking God to give us the new insight, the new sympathy, the new tact and the new unselfishness which will make us ourselves able to help them." James G. Gilkie (*What Can We Believe?* pages 77-78).

"There are no assignable bounds to the effect upon mind and body of the prayer of living faith." Rufus M. Jones (*The Double Search*, page 98).

THE TECHNIQUE OF WORSHIP

Compare the vision of Isaiah in chapter 6: 1-8, with the Lord's Prayer, noting similarities, differences, meanings.

Matthew 6: 9, 10 and Isaiah 6: 1-4.

Matthew 6: 11, 12, 13a and Isaiah 6: 5, 6, 7.

Matthew 6: 13b and Isaiah 6: 8.

Blending these two conceptions of meditation and prayer together would you think this a helpful way in which to pray?

1. To think of the greatness of God who is Creator of the universe, maker of beauty, builder of truth, and Father of men.

2. To think of one's own mistakes and shortcomings as seen in comparison with what God wants us to be, and what we might be.

3. To think of ways in which we could be finer and better.

4. To resolve to put these new ideals into practice.

SECTION XXVIII

THE IDEAL LIFE AND THE USE OF WEALTH

RICH AND POOR

There were great differences in the possession of wealth among Palestinians in the days of Jesus. There was a class of nobles, an aristocracy, a wealthy commercial body of men who had accumulated riches through the positions they held, their commercial ability, or the fruits of war. On the other hand, there was great poverty and want. Constant war had drained the country of its resources, taxes were heavy, and most men had little margin to go on.

Jesus himself was of the middle class, though nearer to the poor than to the wealthy. He was a carpenter, and in his young manhood had supported his mother, brothers and sisters. He went to the rich and to the poor, and seemed at home with both, but spent far more time with the poor than with the rich. His warnings are very severe concerning selfishness, absorption in the pursuit of riches, or a disregard of those in need.

TRUST IN GOD NOT WEALTH

Read Matthew 6: 19-23.

What are "treasures on earth"?

What are "treasures in heaven"?

Why does Jesus emphasize the necessity of placing spiritual things first?

Read Matthew 6: 24-34.

Dr. Goodspeed translates verse 25 "do not worry about life."

Why are we not to worry about life?

Does this mean parents need not take out life insurance?

Does it mean we need not prepare for a professional or business career?

What does it mean?

Did Jesus accumulate a large sum of money? Did he urge his disciples to do so? Why not?

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT WEALTH

It has been said that Americans are obsessed with the desire for wealth, that our people are frankly materialistic, and that they judge all things by their money value. To what extent do you think this is true?

Examine the teachings of Jesus and from them formulate a set of principles to guide one in the use of wealth.

The parable of the Rich Young Man. Read Mark 10: 16-28.

Why did Jesus "look on him and love him"?

What was the Young Man anxious about?

Why did Jesus ask him to give up his wealth?

Had Peter and James and the others given up their livelihoods to go with Jesus?

Could Jesus admit the Young Man with his wealth to the intimate group of disciples?

Is a heavy price sometimes paid for securing wealth? What is the price demanded for financial success?

Did Jesus ask the Young Man to live a narrow life?

Did the Young Man "possess" his wealth, or was he possessed by it?

Did wealth come between him and a higher good?

Read the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12: 13-21.

Why did the man make his request to Jesus? For what did he hope?

Did the Rich Fool have a worthy goal? Why not?

How can a wealthy man be "rich" toward God?

Is wealth to be accumulated for selfish ends?

Does an abundant life consist alone in things that wealth can buy?

Read the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke 16: 13-15, 19-31.

Contrast the condition of the Rich Man and Lazarus on earth.

Why was the Rich Man punished? How had he done wrong?

What danger is there in having great wealth?

Read again Matthew 25: 31-46. Does this teach the same lesson?

Read the Parable of Unrighteous Mammon. Luke 16: 1-13.

How was the steward clever in providing for the future?

Are people usually clever in providing for their material needs? Are they usually as careful about providing for the spiritual side of life?

How can one develop the spiritual side of life?

Did Jesus point out in this parable a way in which wealth could be of great service to its owner? How?

Is it possible for a rich man to be a citizen of the kingdom?

From these four parables, and the two passages in Matthew 6: 19-23, 24-34 write down your principles for the use of wealth.

MODERN EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF WEALTH

It is said that the people of the United States spend each year for luxuries these amounts:

Cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, snuff	\$2,110,000,000
Perfumes, face powders, and cosmetics	750,000,000
Soft drinks	350,000,000
Candy	1,000,000,000
Chewing gum	50,000,000

What is your opinion of these expenditures?

A Baltimorean recently provided an endowment for his wife and children, and gave away all the rest of the money he had inherited. He had no immediate source of income, nor any special training. He believed he had no right to the money he had inherited but had not earned. Discuss his action and his point of view, pro and con.

Russell Conwell earned over a million dollars by lecturing, and gave practically all of it away for college education, to found a university, and to build a hospital. Discuss his action and point of view, in relation to his family, those he helped, and to the community.

A young Seminary graduate decided to work with his hands wherever he could work, but not to accept any money payment. He said that Jesus had had no money, and so he would have none. Discuss his action pro and con. Did he interpret Jesus correctly? Did he act any differently than St. Francis acted? Suppose multitudes followed his example, what would happen? Be sure to see both sides.

A wealthy American inherited a large business. He placed his business "in trust" and devoted his life to spending the income he received from the business on institutions and causes which were for the good of others. Discuss his action and his point of view, pro and con.

Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, a Congregational minister, refused a raise in salary in 1928 saying, "I have enough for my needs." Should he have taken

the larger salary and spent the money on others? Why didn't he? Discuss his point of view.

A wealthy individual gives to the community fund and other public charities, and hopes to leave one of the largest estates in America to his children. Discuss his action and point of view, pro and con.

SECTION XXIX

THE OBLIGATION AND THE FRUITS OF THE IDEAL LIFE

THE TEST OF LIFE

The epilogue to the Sermon on the Mount begins in the thirteenth verse and continues on to the end of the chapter. Jesus repeatedly told his disciples that they must "seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." Upright living was the first duty of a follower of Jesus, and toward that ideal all must struggle earnestly and without ceasing.

In the epilogue Jesus presents three interesting contrasts: the contrast of the broad and narrow way, the contrast of good and bad fruit trees, and the contrast between the poorly built house and the well built house.

Read Matthew 7: 13, 14.

What did the two "ways" symbolize?

Did Jesus expect the majority of men to live up to his ideal?

Why is the "way" so narrow?

If the upright life is so difficult to achieve, what hope is there for a real Christian world?

Read Matthew 7: 15-23.

If the upright life is difficult to lead, how important is it that we choose good teachers as guides? Where shall we look for them? How shall we judge when they are proper guides?

Name some men and women of history whose lives have been good examples for us to follow.

Is Jesus so different from us that he ceases to be a guide to follow, or can we at least hope, in some lesser measure, to duplicate his life? Read John 14: 12.

What are the "fruits" of upright living? Read Galatians 5: 22, 23.

What does it mean to "profess" Christianity? How does this differ from "living" out Christianity?

Is it as important to believe a set of statements about Jesus as it is to endeavor to live out his teachings?

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO HOUSES

The Sermon closes with the comparison of the houses built on sand and on rock. Men were apt to see the ideal life which Jesus pictured for them, to accept it as ideal, but not to strive to realize its demands in their own lives. In the concluding parable, Jesus reminded his disciples of their duty to build their lives according to the pattern set forth by his teachings and example. It was foolish for them to listen to him and then not to straightway practice what they heard.

Read Matthew 7: 24-27.

Do the houses stand for human character?

Was the choice between building and not building, or between building well and building poorly?

Can a person "stand still" in education, or athletic skill, or the development of character? Why or why not?

Does this parable apply only to important people, or those who have had wide opportunities?

In real life what are the rains, floods, and winds which destroy character?

Compare this with the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13: 3-9.

THE EFFECT OF THE SERMON

We have previously noted that Jesus taught in a different way from that of the typical scribe. In a sense the scribe was a scholar, one who had spent years in studying both the Scriptures and all the commentaries upon it made by great teachers of the past. It was not the custom of the scribes to state their own opinions, rather it was usual for them, when asked to interpret a passage, to quote what several teachers of the past had said, even though there might be a measure of disagreement between them. Jesus spoke with a freshness which "astonished the people." He did not quote the sayings of great teachers of the past, but said, "Ye have heard it said of old, but I say unto you." He spoke as did the prophets of his people, directly, and with the

confidence that he was expressing the will of God. He did not give proof of what he taught, but made great axiomatic statements of principles that seem self-evident when studied.

Read Matthew 7: 28, 29.

What Jesus said has challenged men throughout the centuries. As time passes and men find ways to apply his great principles more fully, great changes for the better are made in individuals and in society. Each new generation sees a freshness in his sayings, discovers something that had been overlooked in earlier times, or finds some new need to apply them to evils that previously had been taken for granted. In this fact rests the uniqueness of the words of Jesus. They prick the human conscience, they cause uneasiness and dissatisfaction, they serve as a leaven within society.

In the first century there were millions of slaves who were the absolute property of their masters to do with as his cattle or horses. What did the teachings of Jesus about the sacredness of human personality do to slavery?

Has slavery been abolished everywhere in the world?

What do we mean by "industrial slavery"?

Is there any kind of slavery other than physical slavery? How can this be dealt with?

How have the teachings of Jesus concerning the value of human personality affected government since his time?

How have these teachings affected the attitude of men toward war?

How have these teachings affected the attitude of men in industry?

The Romans practiced exposure of weak or crippled children.

What have the teachings of Jesus caused to be substituted for this practice?

In many lands, in the first century, women had few rights. What have the teachings of Jesus accomplished in this field?

How has Christianity affected the treatment of the sick? Of the insane?

Jesus said a man must be the servant of others, willing to sacrifice to the limit for the good of his fellow-men. Can you name specific incidents in which this teaching has been practiced in the following areas of life: the field of medicine, on the sea, in the field of education, missionary work, family life, community service?

In the beginning of this book Jesus was called the one supremely "great" man of history. Thinking back over your study, what now is your opinion?

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